

DreamWorks Dragons: Defenders of Berk: When in Berk  
by OMAC001

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Summary: With enemies like Dagur the Deranged and the Screaming Death, Berk is in for some tough times. But when a Roman noble comes to offer his aid, is this the salvation of Berk or its doom?

## 1. Chapter 1

\*\*Dreamworks Dragons: Defenders of Berk\*\*

\*\*Episode: When in Berk\*\*

Chapter One: A Stranger Comes to Berk

People as a rule are always cautious around strangers, Vikings especially. I have always taken the view of giving people the benefit of the doubt; as long as they aren't actively threaten the people I care about. It's one of the reasons I believe I was able to get close to Toothless and begin the practice of training dragons. However, one can sometimes forget that not every enemy will come at you with their swords drawnâ€¦

Hiccup and Toothless were on the landing platform to the Dragon Academy, waiting for the others to comeback from patrol. Due to the speed of the Night Fury, Hiccup and his dragon usually arrived before the others were done with their patrol. Thus, it was Hiccup's duty as team leader to wait for the others. Thankfully he didn't have to wait too long as Astrid and Stormfly, her Deadly Nadder, flew up and landed in front of them.

"No sign of Outcasts or Berserkers, Hiccup!" exclaimed Astrid, in the tone of a soldier reporting to her commanding officer. When it came to patrols Astrid was usually very strict and serious, knowing how important it was to Berk's security. Of course, Hiccup usually preferred things being a little informal whenever possible.

"Just like the last timeâ€¦and the time before thatâ€¦and the time

before thatâ€|" drawled Hiccup in a bored tone. Ever since Dagur the Deranged took over the Outcasts, Berk was on high alert in case of a massive invasion. Yet weeks dragged on into months and other than a trap Dagur set for Hiccup and Toothless, there had been no sign of an invasion! Dagur never seemed the type to delay an attack unless there was a good reason! So where was he?!

"You knowâ€|most people would be happy not to have the combined forces of the Berserkers and Outcasts bearing down on Berk." Astrid said sarcastically. While she understood Hiccup's frustration at Dagur's lack of appearance, Astrid thought Hiccup was worrying a little too much about the situation. Dagur had shown that while he could be tricky, he was fixated getting Toothless (which was bad, but made Dagur predictable)!

"Sorry, it justâ€|you ever know that something bad was coming and justâ€|wanted to get it over with already?!" exclaimed Hiccup in frustration. Toothless closed his eyes and moved his head up into Hiccup's hand, which Hiccup scratched behind the ears. It helped calm Hiccup down and Toothless got comforted too (a win-win in Toothless's mind)!

"Hiccupâ€|" began Astrid about to say something which she hopes would ease Hiccup's mind. However, the twins, Ruffnut and Tuffnut, crashed in between them on their Hideous Zippleback, Barf and Belch. As per their usually behavior, the Twins were laughing the whole way, making Astrid worry about what they were doing on their own!

"Soâ€|find anything?" asked Hiccup almost afraid at the answer. Hiccup realized he probably should have sent someone with the twins to keep them in check!

"Wellâ€|we went near Outcast Island like you said to. Nothing on the island or around it, by the way." explained Ruffnut, in a bored tone. Unless it involved explosions or battle, the Twins usually were not excited about any mission they were sent on.

"But on the way backâ€|" started Tuffnut, pausing for dramatic effect. The silence continued on for about one or two minutes.

"Well!" exclaimed Astrid, a little sick of the silence.

"Oh," said Tuffnut, apparently he had forgotten he was talking about something, "but we saw, on the way backâ€|Trader Johan! We did a littleâ€|sprits and boom while he wasn't looking! The look on his face was hilarious!" Tuffnut and Ruffnut began laughing in the rather obnoxious way they always did after a prank.

"Is Trader Johanâ€|?" asked Hiccup nervously. He and Trader Johan had developed something of a friendship in the trader's many trips to Berk. He always managed to bring Hiccup a fresh batch of squid ink nearly every time they met. Not to mention Trader Johan was a friend of the whole village!

"What kind of monsters do you take us for?!" asked Tuffnut in an offended tone, "We just gave him a little scare! Trust me, we made sure!" Tuffnut and Ruffnut usually weren't that careful when it came to their pranks, which usually cause some unintentional damage. Hiccup believed that this time, however, the Twins really did try to

be careful.

"Alright, just need to wait for Snotlout and Fishlegs and we figure out what to do next." stated Hiccup. It was expected that Snotlout and his Monstrous Nightmare would be the next to arrive. While Snotlout had the slight longer patrol, Fishlegs and his Gronkle were well known as the slowest of all the dragons. This time, however!

"Hey guys!" Fishlegs shouted while he was still a fair distances away. Surprisingly, Meatlug was hovering slowly towards the gang! The Gronkle had a problem moving fast because of her small wings (which fluttering almost as fast as a hummingbird just to keep it aloft). It did allow the Gronkle to land with remarkable precision, allowing Fishlegs to report directly to Hiccup, "The coast was clear on Dragon Islandâ€|you know except for the dragons! Though I guess if the coast really was clear, than we might have to worry! Or would that just mean the dragons were somewhere else! Or maybeâ€!"

"Alright Fishlegs! We get the idea!" exclaimed Hiccup, stopping Fishlegs' roundabout report before asking, "Hey Fishlegs, did you see Snotlout on your way over here? He usuallyâ€|wellâ€!"

"Beats here? No I didn't see him! Though he could have just gone further out to sea!" said Fishlegs, both excited for beating Snotlout back and a little worried. Snotlout had a tendency of performing risky maneuvers to impress or out show the others, specifically Astrid!

"Look, we'll wait another few moments, than Astrid and I will go over Snotlout's route and see what happen." stated Hiccup wearily. Hiccup hoped Snotlout had not done anything stupidâ€|though he didn't count on it! It was really annoying how often Snotlout overestimated his own abilities! It got him and the gang more often than it should!

"Hey looks like old Snotty coming in for a landing!" exclaimed Tuffnut while putting towards the sky. Indeed, Snotlout and Hookfang were coming in for a landingâ€|rather awkwardly! It seemed that Snotlout had been pushing Hookfang to ride without rest again! This got the other a little worried (except the Twins, they were just looking forward to Snotlout's epic crash)!

Crashing more than landing, Hookfang slide across the ground from the platform into the former dragon-fighting arena turned classroom! The others rushed in, Hiccup, Astrid and Fishlegs to see if Snotlout and Hookfang were alright, while the Twins wanted to get a better look at the 'carnage!' Inside they saw that Hookfang had finally landed in a flop on the ground, while Snotlout had been sent flying into the chalkboard Hiccup had set up! Normally hilarious, everyone save the Twins held back on the laughter until they could get answers from Snotlout!

"Snotlout what the Hel happened!" asked Astrid rather derisively. Snotlout was known for doing a lot of stupid things and this did not look any different! However, rather than respond to Astrid's taunt, Snotlout struggled to his feet with a look ofâ€|terror on his face! Snotlout was not the type to allow his fear to show fear to anything!

That's why Hiccup stepped forward and asked, "What did you see Snotlout? Was itâ€|Dagur?" As stated previous, an attack from Dagur and his combined Outcast/Bezerker forces was expected. Dagur the Deranged was obsessed with the destruction of Berk and more specifically, Hiccup and Toothless. Which is why they were surprised when Snotlout shook his head!

So Hiccup asked, "Was itâ€|the Screaming Death?" Next to Dagur, the Screaming Death, a huge white specimen of the subspecies of Whispering Death, was the biggest danger to Berk. Born out of one of Alvin the Treacherous' schemes to conquer Berk, the Screaming Death had an instinct to destroy the place of it birthâ€|in this case Berk! One of the largest and most powerful dragons the Berkians had ever come across, a dragon anyone would be afraid to faceâ€|which is why it was puzzling when Snotlout again shook his head!

"Thenâ€|what did you see?" asked Hiccup being unable to think of any other threat Snotlout could have come across. Snotlout looked left to right, as if expecting a spy to be listening in, and then motioned for Hiccup to lean in closer. Hiccup did so, as did the other riders. When Snotlout had his head next to Hiccup's ear, Snotlout gave his answer,

"\*\*\*ROMANS!\*\*\*"

Before promptly 'passing out' leaving the riders confused, and Hiccup with a sore ear!

Disclaimer: I don't own Dreamworks Dragons: Defenders of Berk. I truly wished I did! For those of you who have read my previous work in other categories, thank you for your loyalty. For new readers, welcome! This is my first attempt at How to Train Your Dragon, so be honest in your reviews (just no flames please)! This will mostly take place after "A View to a Skrill" though I might place information from the following episodes in the story as I see fit. I should be able to put up the next chapter soon, so read and review!

## 2. Chapter 2

### Chapter Two: Surprising Revelation

Tension was rife in the rough and tumble Viking village of Berk! Every member of the village was preparing themselves for the Roman attack! While it is true that Berk had never really fought the Romans before, the reputations of these vicious conquerors could not be denied! The fearsome Legionnaires who fought like machines, the massive weapons of war they brought with them into battle! But what was truly horrible was how the Romans treated their prisoners!

If a warrior was ever captured by the Romans, they faced two terrible fatesâ€|either they were sold off to live as slaves, to be either a plaything of the Roman nobles or in backbreaking labor for their masters, orâ€|they became gladiators! A gladiator was forced to fight for the amusement the Roman citizens in \*\*huge\*\* arenas! The gladiators would face beast, including dragons, and fight other gladiators to the death! Now, while it is true a Viking relishes a good fight, they would not appreciate a fight degraded into a sport! Especially when the slave and the gladiator had one thing in commonâ€|they would never see their loved ones again!

"Gobber! How are the catapults coming?!" exclaimed Stoick the Vast, doing a last minute review of the harbor defenses.

"Aye chief, all the defenses are up, the catapults are in position and everybody's blade is \*\*sharp!\*\*" exclaimed Gobber the Belch, in his thick accent(1), with a laugh. As the village blacksmith, Gobber took extra pride in how he crafts and maintains the weapons of the Vikings. Plus, with the peace between Berk and dragons, his blacksmithing services were not used quite that often, but that's another storyâ€|(2)

"Good!" replied Stoick before turning to Spitelout Jorgenson, Snoutlout's father, who was in charge inner defenses, "How's everything going?"

"The provisions are stock, all who \*\*can't\*\* fight are in the Great Hall, and every important position is now guarded!" explained Spitelout while standing at attention. When it came to being in a fight, Spitelout was as reliable as a well-maintained sword. He often tried made sure that his son lived up to his high expectations. Still in this instance, Spitelout was the best man for the job!

"Excellent, get into positions! This could be the toughest battle to date! May Thor guide your hand in the battle to come!" declared Stoick, dismissing his men to their posts, before turning to his son Hiccup, who was standing beside him, "Hiccup, I need to know more about what we're facing. Are you sure Snotlout didn't say anything else?"

"No!" replied Hiccup wearily, having been asked this same question in about a dozen different ways, "All he did was scream 'Romans' before collapsing from exhaustion!" Taking some time to collect himself, Hiccup decided to ask, "Dad, are the Romans really that dangerous? I mean I don't remember anytime they've ever attack Berk or anywhere in the Barbaric Archipelagoâ€|ever!"

Sighing, Stoick turned to Hiccup and explained, "That's not entirely true, Hiccup. There was a time, in the past, when the Romans attack the Archipelago, looking to conquer more lands and slaves! Every island had been attacked at least once by the Romans! Even Berk was attacked, though it happened during the time of Hamish I!"

"What happen?" asked Hiccup, wanting to know more about the upcoming enemy.

Taking a deep breath, Stoick further explained, "According to the ancient scrolls, the Roman fleet had managed to sneak into Berk under the cover of night! It was only because of a little boy disobeying his parents that the village managed to muster up any resistances! Even so, the Romans had more or less taken control of the village and were about to execute Hamish and his family. But then the most unlikely event turned it all aroundâ€|"

"What?" asked Hiccup, feeling like a kid hearing his dad's war stories.

"The dragons started attacking Berk! Now, normally, this would have been a bad thing, but the beasties had decided to focus all their

efforts on the Roman fleet and army! I don't know, maybe they saw them as the bigger threat! But the Romans were completely helpless against the dragons \_and\_ the Vikings of Berk! So they did the only thing they couldâ€|they jumped on their ships and sailed away, never to returnâ€|until now!" Stoick finished his story with epic rendition.

"So it's because of the dragons that Berk still exists!" replied Hiccup, seeing this as more proof of Human and dragon cooperation.

"Don't get your hopes up; the dragons still stole some of the livestock! And the Romans didn't leave without exacting a price! Especially of the Jorgenson family!" explained Stoick, hoping to keep Hiccup's mind on the current problem.

"Wait, what do you mean 'especially on the Jorgenson family'?" asked Hiccup confused by that part of the story.

Sighing, again, Stoick turned back to Hiccup and said, "That little boy who snuck out and saw the Romansâ€|it was Snotlout's great grandfather!" Hiccup wears an expression of shock while Stoick continues the story, "After the Romans conquered the village but before the dragon attack, the Centurion demanded the boy's parents reveal themselves! When they stepped forward, the Centurion turned to the boy and said, 'This is the price you pay for not listening to your elders!' With that he signal two of the soldiers and, with ruthless precision, cut down his parents right in front of the boy! After the dragons drove them off, the boy would live with his uncle, but the Joffersons never forgot what the Centurion did that day!"

"Stoick!" yelled Gobber, running towards the father and son, "I just came from the lookout tower! They've spotted the Romans!"

Clenching his fists, Stoick turned to the warriors and yelled, "EVERYONE! Into your positions! Hiccup, I need you to organize the riders in case we can't hold them off! Gobber, how many ships did the lookout see?"

"Well," said Gobber hesitantly, "that's the thing. He only saw one ship."

Hiccup stopped as he was about to head to where the riders were stationed, "Come again?" asked Hiccup and Stoick at the same time, not sure they heard Gobber correctly.

"Like I said there was only \*\*one \*\*Roman ship heading to Berk as far as the lookout could see!" explained Gobber, just as confused as they were, "And it looked pretty banged up too! There were patches jobs from what \_I \_could see andâ€|"

Stoick look fairly irked at Gobber's pause when he asked, "And what?!"

"They were flying a flag of truce!" said Gobber quickly, flinching a little at Stoick's tone. Stoick and Hiccup both had confuse looks on their faces. This was not what they were expecting! All the stories they heard about Roman, including about how they attack Berk in the past, could not prepare them for the Romansâ€|seeking peace!

"What do you think son?" asked Stoick, both as a test of his heir and a genuine query for advice. Stoick was skilled at diplomacy, but mostly with people he was familiar with: Vikings! Hiccup had an insight into the unknown which created the Berkian practice of training dragons! If anyone knew what to do it would be Hiccup!

Thinking it over for a moment, Hiccup replied, "I'll have Fishlegs and Meatlug scout around for any other ships! We should keep the defense up but wait for their move! After thatâ€œ!" Hiccup pause for what he was about to say next, "Looks like me and you are gonna go greet some visitors!"

This last sentence did not go over well with everybody! "Stoick, you can't meet with thesesâ€œ!" Spitelout paused, unable to give words to his hate for the Romans, "For all you know it could be a trap!"

Stoick contemplated what was said by Spitelout and hiccup said, before coming to a decision, "It's trueâ€œ|it might be a trap. But, it could also be legitimate. There have been rumors going around about the fall of Rome. Until we speak with the captain of the ship, we'll go with Hiccup's suggestion."

"But Stoickâ€œ|" began Spitelout, not happy with the situation.

"No buts, Jorgenson! That's how we are going to do this!" exclaimed Stoick, leaving no room for argument. Turning towards the dock Stoick went to meet the ship, while Hiccup went to get Fishlegs to patrol the island for Roman ships. A few moments after Stoick arrived at the dock the Roman ship began to arrive in sight. It was the first time Stoick ever saw a Roman ship before and in his opinionâ€œ|he was not impressed!

Many of the designs were similar to a Viking ships; a single mast with a square sail, the same low single deck, and a 'figurehead'(3) to differentiate the bow from the stern. There were differences, like the fact that the 'figurehead' was not made in the any animal save a swirled conch shell, that large eyes had been painted right below the 'figurehead' along with Latin runes painted on the side of the ship, there was a jutting piece of wood (obviously designed to ram a ship) on the bow of the ship, and finally there holes for oars along the deck. What really set it apart from the Viking ships in Berk's harbor was simpleâ€œ|it was a mess!

The Roman ship was covered in boards used as patches for damaged suffered either in battle or from stormy weather. You could tell because the boards didn't match the wood the ship was made out! Also, the sail had patches put in it and stitches used to covered damage done. There appeared to be no sign of weapons on the deck, though Stoick could barely see the crew on the deck, working about various tasksâ€œ|

Hiccup managed to arrive just as the ship entered port! He had to run most of the way, due to the unspoken agreement between the two to leave the dragons out of sight. They knew absolutely nothing about who had come to visit Berk and they planned for any contingency! Many people of the world were still terrified of dragons, so if these people were friendly, they would be slowly introduced to the dragons.

And if they were \*\*unfriendly\*\*, wellâ€|their introduced would be muchâ€|\_quicker!\_

A ramped land from the ship and no sooner than it was secured than walked down the single mostâ€|\_unique\_ person ever to come to Berk! Wearing styled leather boots with white fur around the ankle, his footsteps were measured but playful, like he was showing off. His black pants were much like what a Viking would wear, but his shirt was white and made of silk. In addition he wore a grey wolfs fur vest over his shirt much like Hiccups. But there were obvious differences between him and the Vikings of Berk!

He had a tanned skin tone which immediately identified him as someone from the Mediterranean Sea. His black was windswept and carefully combed. His green eyes held an easy smile, which he showed on his lips. Most peculiar was the cat lying on his shoulders! It was grey with black spots in its fur, with white fur on its underbelly(4). It was unusual to see a cat on Berk because of the superstition revolving around cats and the sea!

"Aaah, such rustic charm!" said the visitor before turning his attention to Stoick and Hiccup, "Oh my apologies, I was just admiring the beauty of this wonderful village! Allow me to introduce myselfâ€|I am Ameilianus Augustus Aemilius, but you can just call me Ameilianus! I am sure you are wondering why I have come to Berk! Well, to put it simpleâ€|I am your \_\*\*SALVATION!\*\*\_"

Disclaimer: I don't own DreamWorks Dragons franchise or the book series it is based off of. I brought the Romans in after finding out they show up in the book series. I don't know if they would have met in real life, but it would have been near the end of the Roman Empire. I should point out that some of the details like the treatment of prisoners and slaves are clearly exaggerated. After Berk would have only heard tall tales of the Roman Empire. Also, when you think of Aemilianus's voice, use either voice actors Macro Grazzini and Alex House, aka the voice of Alejandro in the Total Dram franchise! My Roman noble's name is based off of Marcus Aemilius Aemilianus Augustus, a true Roman emperorâ€|for three months in 253AD! However, he is more based on the infamous Roman emperors, Caligula and Nero, who's names will be used forâ€|other creatures relate to him! Hope I didn't leave too many hints on where this story is heading! Please read and review to tell me what you think!

1 Unfortunately I am not good with writing accents. You'll just have to imagine it whenever Gobber speaks. You probably should watch the show or movie for reference

2 This is a references for the DreamWorks Dragons: Riders of Berk episode 'Viking for Hire'

3 I don't know if it's really a figurehead but it would look like that from a Viking perspective. Oh, by the way the ship is a Roman Trireme.

4 An Egyptian Mau. You'll find out its name next chapterâ€|and its disposition! MUWHAHAHA!

### Chapter Three: Friendly FaÃ§ade

The mood around the Great Hall had turned from battle ready to cautious curiosity. Ameilianus Augustus Aemilius had just come to Berk in a beaten up Roman trireme with a promise of Berk's 'salvation.' Needless to say, the confusion of the Vikings was evident! What they thought was coming to bring death and destruction had promised to save them! Given Berk's past encounter with the Romans, this promise was taken with a grain of salt, especially since there did not seem to be anything special about the visitor or his ship, other than being Roman!

Inside the Great Hall, Ameilianus and several of his crew members were sitting on one side of the great table, while the most important of Berk, including Hiccup and Stoick, sat on the other side. Ameilianus's cat, an Egyptian Mau, lay in front of his owner, taking a nap, seemingly oblivious to its surroundings. The silence was tense, and the only one completely calm was Ameilianus, as if he knew something everyone else didn't!

"Soâ€|umâ€|" began Hiccup, not quite sure what to ask in this situation or how to politely point it out, "Iâ€|that isâ€|we would like to knowâ€|umâ€|"

"Why are you here?!" demanded Spitelout Jorgenson, angry that the Romans had not been run through when they landed. The Jofferson family had a lot of bad history surrounding the Romansâ€|surrounding the Romans' last visit to Berk! So Needless to say, Spitelout was not happy about the current situation!

Many of the crew members of the Roman ship glared angrily at Spitelout; apparently they held their captain in high regards. Paradoxically, Aneilianus gave a small chuckle at Spitelout's behavior, before saying, "I feel there is a lot ofâ€|unfinished business between your friend and my people Hiccup. Regardless, I will be happy to speak to him about it after this gathering."

Standing up, Ameilianus look over to the assembled Vikings, Hiccup especially, the calm easy attitude of a door-to-door salesman and said, "The reason I have come to Berk is for no other reason than to help you with your currentâ€|situation. Now I suppose you are wonder 'just what could this little Roman brat know about Berk's troubles?!' Well, I know that you are currently facing a combined assault by the Outcasts and Bezerkers led by Dagur the Deranged, a well titled psychopath! I also know that a Screaming Death, a giant white sub-breed of Whispering Death, is set to attack Berk again, and you have yet to formulate a strategy to beat it! But most important of the things I know about Berkâ€|I know that the Vikings of Berk have the ability to train dragons!"

Looks of shock and, in certain case (\_'cough' 'cough'\_ Spitelout \_'cough'\_ ) horror, became etched on the Vikings faces. Berk had made it a point to keep the fact that they had the ability to train dragons a secret from all but their closest of allies. They were not always successful but the Outcasts and Bezerkers had no desire to share this information, as they want the power and glory for themselves! It was startling that Ameilianus could learn any of this on his own!

Smiling at their confusion, Ameilianus elaborate more, "I managed to

cobble together some information about Berk from rumors sailors tell in their travels. Normally, I don't give much credence to suchidle gossip. But the fact that I keep hearing about so often and frequently, I just had to come to Berk and see it for myself! Of course on the way I learned about your troubles and I just had to come and offer my services!"

"And how far exactly have you travelled to get here?" asked Gobber, wonder how far rumors of Berk had truly spread. Truthfully, they had only been training dragons for a **\*\*year\*\***; there was no way word could have spread that far!

"My family has travelled from the Mediterranean to Londinium(1), where as I have kept my travels mostly between Britannia and the Emerald Isle(2)! It was during my times in the Court of the Bear King, where I met the lovely Princess Merida that I first heard of Berk! Aaah, Merida(3)â|. " sighed Ameilianus, with a look of longing before composing himself and continuing.

"Anyway, I immediately began a journey up to the Barbaric Archipelago in search of Berk! Truthfully, I have run acrossâ|opposition due to the last visit my Roman ancestors made to this region, but I assure you that you have nothing to fear in that regard! For you seeâ|as of fifty years agoâ|the Roman Empire has ceased to exist!" exclaimed Ameilianus dramatically.

For the Vikings of Berk, the reaction to the news of Rome's fall was surprisingly mixed! For years all the Vikings had ever heard of was the 'unconquerable, unstoppable, Roman Empire' and all the wonders and horrors that they brought with them. For Spitelout, he took the news with a grin on his face: finally his family's long time enemies were dead! He was only upset that they could not have brought down the final blow! Hiccup on the other hand was distressed. As a person who forged new ideas and concept, he had heard much about the good things the Romans had made, such as roads and libraries. And now all of that was just gone! Sure Romans were tyrants, but that made their fall only bittersweet!

Stoick, on the other hand, had other concerns which he sought to address, "How exactly did Rome fall? From what I was given to understand, they were highly formidable adversaries."

Forming his hands to rest his chin on them, Ameilianus began his explanation, "The fall of Rome could attributed to a lot of reasons, but the one that always stood out in my mind is simple: Rome just got too greedy. Allow me to explain, with each new emperor, Rome expanded into new territory as a show of those emperors' worth. Unfortunately, it got to a point where Rome had too much territory to properly guard and protect. This also led to another problem: the barbarians at the border."

Ameilianus took a moment to compose himself, as the subject he was discussing caused him undue stress. Letting out a sigh, he continued, "It is said that the best warriors learn from their enemies, what they don't mention is that the best enemies learn from the warrior as well! You see the Visigoths and other Germanic tribes learned from the Empire's legions; their tactics, their strategies, and even the Roman language. Part of what kept the barbarians from uniting was the lack of a common language, which Rome, unfortunately, provided. This allowed them to take advantage of the poorly guarded borders of the

Roman Empire.

"It was years and years of fighting between the Roman Legion and the Barbarian Horde! To make matters worse, the eastern half of the Empire decided to split from Rome, over some religious disagreement! I don't know the whole story; the point is Rome was in bad shape! My family was among those who managed to charter some ships in order to find safe haven elsewhere! Now my family was loyal to Rome, even had a few Centurions in the past, but there was no way to save Rome except one: preserve our knowledge!

"You see, my grandparents, along with several other minor families, had gathered together many documents about Roman culture, history, and science! They loaded onto various ships and headed off to safe haven! Now the journey was long and treacherous, we started out with about \*\*fifty\*\* triremes, when we reach Londinium, we only had \*\*thirty\*\* left! After that, they all decided to settle down and start a life, I was theâ€|\_ 'ahem' \_â€|result some years later by my parents! After that, the rest is history!" finished Ameilianus with a flourish.

The Vikings around the table looked at each other, unsure of what to make of the story. Spitelout was suspicious of a Roman trick, while Gobber simple thought it was a lovely story. Hiccup wanted to believe the story the most becauseâ€|well because it would be nice for a visitor to come the Berk without an ulterior motive, like with Dagur or Heather (though that one led to good results, come to think of it)!

In the end, Stoick took it upon himself to respond to the Roman's 'heartfelt story,' "Your story isâ€|quite moving. But I have to point out that it does call your proposal into question?"

"How so?" asked Ameilianus, still sporting a confident grin.

"From your story, your family and remnants of Rome do not have a lot of manpower or weapons to offer. So how are you going to help in Berk's defense?" asked Stoick, hoping to get an idea of what Ameilianus was offering.

Spiralout sported a smirk of his own at that question. At last, they had a reason to kick the Roman to the curb! Berk did not need nor want the help of a Roman, or so Spitelout thought! So when Ameilianus gave his reply, Spitelout's hopes sank, "What if I could give you a rough date on when and how Dagur was planning to attack Berk?"

This cause Stoick to lose his \*\*stoic \*\*expression for an instant, before return to it and asking, "How would you have come by this information?"

Ameilianus leaned back in his chair, causing it to creak and his Mau to straighten up and stretch. Then he replied, "I'm sure your scouts could tell you I just arrived from Bezerk Island. During my usually trades, I heard Dagur discussing, or rather bragging, his plans to another Viking. He was a bit leaner than your usual Viking with a goatee and mustache that looked like the ends of a broom(4)."

"Savage!" Hiccup exclaimed alarmed. For Ameilianus to give such an

accurate description, he had to have seen the Viking in question. Former second-in-command to Alvin the Terrible, he switched loyalties after Alvin's apparent demise. Hiccup was still unsure if that wily enemy was truly dead, but he had not shown up for months now! Anyway, this confirmed that Ameilianus was telling the truth, because while Dagur was infamous, Savage was more of a behind the scenes type of enemy.

"Yes, I believe that was his name! Anyway, I managed to overhear that Dagur is planning to attack Berk within seven days of my arrival here! Not that he knew I was coming of course! I just subtracted the days I was out at sea!" reassured Ameilianus, after seeing some of the Vikings ('cough' 'cough' Spitelout 'cough') becoming hostile.

Stoick stroked his beard and replied, "We thank you for this information. It will help us prepare for the upcoming attack. But I think you should get out of here. The Bezerker fleet won't care who they hit when they attack and--"

"I'm afraid the situation is a little direr than you think it is." interrupted Ameilianus, "You see there is a reason why Dagur was so specific with his time of attack. His scouts have managed to locate another enemy of Berkâ€|one that's as big as two longshipsâ€|white as boneâ€|with \*\*red\*\* glowing eyesâ€|"

It took Hiccup only a moment to figure out what Ameilianus was describing, "The Screaming Death!" With that, every Viking grew concerned. A violent subspecies of Whispering Death, the massive dragon had shown the capability to destroy entire islands! Hiccup and the riders had only been able to beat it back two times by the skin of their teeth! Even then, there were a chain of islands lost to the creature's rampage and it had a fixed desire to destroy Berk!

"Exactly!" confirmed Ameilianus, with a somber tone, "Dagur has planned this attack to coincide with the Screaming Death attacking Berk! It will be chaos! That's why you need me!"

"Like I said before, what do you have to offer us?" asked Stoick getting a little sick of Ameilianus' attitude. He seemed to expect Berk to beg him for his help without any kind of proof!

"How about Greek fire!?" replied Ameilianus, reveling in the shocked looks of the Viking. Even in Berk, everyone had heard of the legendary naval weapon! The Greeks had perfected an incendiary substance that causes water to catch fire! Any navy that had such substance had not only the ability to block an armada of ships, but the ability to put \*\*fear \*\*into his enemies' hearts!

"Youâ€|you have that with you?!" asked Stoick, shocked. It was a very dangerous substance that had to be kept away from waterâ€|hard to do on a ship!

"The secret to creating Greek fire was one of the secrets my family took with them when they left Rome! I have about ten casks of it in my ships, but since some of the ingredients come from dragons(5)â€| " lead on Ameilianus, hoping someone in the crowd would finish his thought.

"We could make more<sup>1</sup> as long as it doesn't require harming the dragons!" warned Hiccup, protective of the dragons of Berk.

"Trust me, hurting your dragons is the furthest thing from my mind!" assured Ameilianus, before turning to Stoick, "All I ask in return for my help, is to learn from your son all that he has learned about dragons. Preserving knowledge has been one of the primary goals of my family since the Fall of Rome! If you like, my crew could help tweak your other defenses in addition! So<sup>2</sup> do we have a deal?"

Ameilianus extended his hand to seal the deal. Stoick pondered all of what Ameilianus had said. It seemed too good to be true! But if even half of what the lad said was accurate, Berk would be in for the fight of its life! Stoick seized Ameilianus' hand and shook it, sealing the deal!

"It will be up to my son how much you'll learn about dragons! We've already had too many people try to steal our secrets!" said Stoick firmly, to show he meant business.

"I completely understand! I will now leave you to your planning, while Hiccup shows me this<sup>3</sup> Academy I have heard so much about!" said Ameilianus, motioning for his men to mingle with the other Vikings, while the Mau jumped onto his shoulders as he stood. Walking over to Hiccup, they both walked out of the Grand Hall, presumably towards the Academy, talking animatedly. Ameilianus only looked back once and only Spitelout saw him, but from that day forward, he swore that Ameilianus had a **\*\*dark glint\*\*** in his eyes as he gave an easy smile towards the Vikings and his cat imitate the expression!

Disclaimer: I don't own DreamWorks Dragons franchise or the book series it is based off of. I also don't own the Pixar film Brave or any characters related to the film. As you can imagine, the snow storm has caused a lot of cabin fever; this story is my way of letting out the tension! Please remember to read AND review people. I live for your feedback on my writing!

1 Old name for London, originally a Roman colony

2 The Roman name for Great Britain and the locale name for Ireland

3 Merida and her father the Bear King Fergus feature prominently in the Pixar film Brave. Interesting side note, Merida/Hiccup is a prominent fan pairing that I support, though Astrid/Hiccup is good too!

4 That's how I have always thought of his mustache and goatee anyway

5 The actual ingredients of 'Greek Fire' have never been fully explained. I just added dragon based ingredients to fit in the story.

#### 4. Chapter 4

##### Chapter Four: Duel Personalities

The path to the Berk Dragon Academy ran along a sheer cliff edge. It

was founded in the same Dragon Arena the Vikings used to practice dragon fighting in. This work as a place for the dragons and their riders to practice their skills, as well as serving as a symbol for the change in the way of life for the Vikings! Ameilianus looked over the Academy as he and Hiccup walked up to the entrance, while his Egyptian Mau lounging on his shoulders. The Riders had assembled in the arena as Hiccup had asked them to earlierâ€œ including a conscious Snotlout!

"Hey Hiccup! What's the hold-up?! When the heck are we going to get out there and burn some Roman—" Snotlout began while walking over to Hiccup, before stopping at seeing the guest Hiccup had, "Who's the fancy-pants?"

"That would be one of the Romans you wanted to 'burn.'" Replied Hiccup simply. Hiccup had hoped that Snotlout would have still been unconscious from his power ride back to Berk. After learning the history that the Joffersons had with Rome, the last thing Hiccup wanted to deal with was Snotlout's reaction to the alliance. Snotlout was a pain when he didn't have a reason to be angry!

Snotlout gave Ameilianus a once over, like a fighter gauging his opponent. He turned back to the Riders as if he was going to walk awayâ€œ before turning and punching Ameilianus in the face! Quickly the other riders restrained Snotlout before he could go any further. Hiccup help Ameilianus get back up onto his feetâ€œ not seeing Ameilianus' cat begin to attack Snotlout!

"Aaaaah! Get it off!" shrieked Snotlout as the Egyptian Mau began to take its revenge on the person who attacked his master/favorite perch! Clawing and scratching, the Mau scrambled all over Snotlout, both staying out of reach and making sure he got to every part of Snotlout's body! The other riders stood back, both amused at the cat's revenge and hoping not to get caught in the crossfire.

"Caligula! ENOUGH!" commanded Ameilianus, having finally got onto his two feet and witnessing the spectacle. Immediately the Mau named Caligula halted his attack on Snotlout and gave him one final death glare before returning to his master's side. Petting his cat, possibly rewarding his behavior, Ameilianus looked on the riders and studied them in detail.

Ameilianus noted that Snotlout (who he mental referred to as 'Lunkhead') was already defensive about the Roman's arrival and given his relative in the Grand Hall (the both share many similar features) it was likely a family thing. His dragon, which he had walked back to after Caligula's assault abated, was a Monstrous Nightmare and given the looks the dragon was giving the rider, did not truly respect or obey him. Turning his gaze upon the twins Ruffnut and Tuffnut (whom he again mentally referred to as 'Dumb and Dumber,' through he could not figure out which was which) He noted how they enjoyed 'Lunkhead's' suffering and yet still held a vacant look in both their eyes. Their dragon was the Hideous Zippleback, obviously needing both riders to work together to controlâ€œ which seemed unlikely at the best of times.

Ameilianus then turned his gaze towards Fishlegs (whom he mentally referred as 'Meatball' because of his shape) whom he saw as actually appearing quite thoughtful if somewhat shy. 'Meatball's' dragon was a

Gronkle, a slow, clumsy dragon built for taking hits than dishing them out. Ameilianus also noted that 'Meatball' held a surprising affection for the beast, though he would never call it that in this company. Ameilianus again turned his gaze upon the vision of beauty known to Berk as Astrid (though he mentally referred to her as 'Valkyrie' for what else could she be but a warrior goddess(1))! She had a warrior's steely gaze and impeccable beauty accented the muscles she formed from training. Her dragon was the Deadly Nadder, a beautiful but deadly dragon which complemented her perfectly!

Finally, Ameilianus returned his gaze to Hiccup (who although he knew his real name, still mentally referred to him as 'Surprise.') Truthfully, when he first laid eyes of Hiccup, it seemed \_unbelievable \_that this was the Viking who had started the training of dragons! Ameilianus, before arriving at Berk, had always visualized Hiccup (he only knew him as 'The Dragon Conqueror' at that time) as a typical big, strong, Viking capable of wrestling dragons to the ground! When he actually was introduced to Hiccup by Stoickâ€|he felt somewhat disappointed. At least until he began talking to Hiccup on the way up to the Dragon Academy!

Hiccup was, to put it quite simply, a \*\*genius\*\* amongst theseâ€|simple folk! They both discussed many topics, including many of the devices that Hiccup had invented himself! With a mind like his, it was no wonder that Hiccup was the talk of the Archipelago! And it didn't stop thereâ€|Hiccup had the heart of a warrior and the mind of a general! If he had the nerveâ€|Hiccup could rule the Barbaric Archipelago and so much more! Seeing that Hiccup was done explaining Ameilianus' presences to the other riders (to the distaste of Snotlout), Ameilianus decided speak with the riders.

"Thank you for informative explanation, but I believe I can take it from here." said Ameilianus, politely motioning Hiccup to allow him to speak. Hiccup stepped back, while Ameilianus prepped himself and then said, "I would like to say hello to the esteemed riders and defenders of Berk! You, who have worked long and hard to improve yourselves and your skills with your dragons! I have long researched all I could of the famed dragon riders and I hope to learn more about you as I help you repel the upcoming attack! The only way this moment could be more perfect is if I could have witness the famed Night Fury your leader Hiccup ridesâ€|"

"Oh Toothless is just resting at my house! Let me go get him!" exclaimed Hiccup before rushing to his home to get Toothless. This left Ameilianus alone with the other riders. An awkward silence fell over the group as Ameilianus was not prepared for Hiccup's sudden departure and the riders did not know what to talk about. It soon fell to Fishlegs to break the silences.

"Okay, soâ€|umâ€|welcome to the Berk Dragon Training Academy! Um, I'm sure Hiccup told you a little about this place, like that it used to be used forâ€|killingâ€|dragonsâ€|" Fishlegs ended the conversation awkwardly and then trailed off. Silence soon reigned once more before the Twins decided to get in on the action.

"Soâ€|your pet certainly knows how to kick butt!" exclaimed Tuffnut, remembering how Ameilianus' pet cat Caligula had attacked Snotlout. Snotlout gave a death glare from across the room, not wanting to be reminded of his humiliating encounter with the vicious feline. This

caused Astrid to giggle, which she quickly covered up by clearing her throat.

"Ah yes, my good friend Caligula can be a little overprotective at times!" jokingly affirmed Ameilianus.

"Soâ€|is he named after someone?" asked Astrid, wondering what hidden meaning Caligula's name might have. Most names Vikings gave their dragons could easily be explained, like how Stoick's dragon Thornado was the combination of the god Thor and a tornado.

"Funnily enough, Caligula's name is truthfully more of a nickname!(2)" explained Ameilianus, "You see, I found little Caligula as a kitten sleeping in an old pair of caligae. That was a type of hob-nailed boots members of the Roman Legion used to wear. From that day forth, he back my 'little soldier's boots!'"

The riders began to laugh at the adorable source for the cat's name. Even Snotlout joined in, mostly because his new nemesis was humiliated by the story. No seriously, Ameilianus' cat was giving his owner a death-glare for daring to reveal the embarrassing background for his name. He was a kitten looking for somewhere warm to sleep; how was he to know there was **\*\*already\*\*** an embarrassing nickname waiting for him!

It was during this laughter that a crooning roar was heard from the skies above the Arena. Everyone stopped laughing and listened in. The roar was heard again and all the riders calmed down, leaving Ameilianus to ask, "What in Hades is that?!"

"That would be Hiccup and his dragon wanting us to go outside and see their performance." said Astrid, with a weary relief that told this happened fairly often. Hiccup was rarely the type to show but when it came to riding Toothlessâ€|well, everybody had an exception. The riders rushed out with their dragons, leaving Ameilianus and Caligula somewhat stunned before they themselves rushed out.

The riders and dragons had already formed a row outside the entrance, forcing Ameilianus to push through. Once through he looked aroundâ€|and then looked up to the spectacle. It was truly amazing! Hiccup and Toothless were performing what could only be described aerial acrobatics; they performed breakneck turns and aerial loops and used his plasma shots to create their own fireworks display! Just then Toothless preformed a sharp dive to the impromptu audience and just when he was about to crashâ€|

Toothless unfurled his wings, causing both dragon and rider to stop and land on a dime! While the riders and their dragons had flinched out of the way, Ameilianus and Caligula stood in front of them gob smacked! Really their mouths were just hanging open and eyes wide to the magnificent performance! Hiccup got off of Toothless and explained, "Sorry about the flashy entrance! Toothless here," patting his dragon, "wanted to show off for the visitors! Now then, I believe we wereâ€|talkingâ€|.aboutâ€|"

Hiccup petered out of the conversation when he realized Ameilianus was not paying attention to him at all! Ameilianus wore the same awed expression as he slowly advance towards Toothless, drinking in the details of this magnificent dragon! Every scale, every talon, every tooth, and those **\*\*eyes\*\*** brought a sense of wonder into

Ameilianus! Even the prosthetic tail with Berk's symbol on it only serve to show you that the dragon was really \*\*real\*\*, standing there, right in front of him!(3)

"You're so beautiful!" slowly exclaimed Ameilianus, slowly rubbing his hands over Toothless. Toothless was grateful for the attention, even if he was more used to Hiccup petting him. Hiccup, on the other hand, looked somewhat disturbed by the amount of what could only be called worship. Ameilianus was putting into Toothless. Maybe that like stunt show was a little too much! \_thought Hiccup.

"Wow, looks like Toothless has got himself a new admirer!" exclaimed Astrid jokingly, seeing how uncomfortable Hiccup was. Truth be told, wonder was a common reaction when dealing with a Night Fury. It was a complete unknown until Hiccup began taming it; no one had even seen one before! Still, Ameilianus seems to having taken his appreciation to a rather weird direction.

"Ah, it's understandable. Why when I first saw Toothless, I wrote down every detail I could in my journal! He truly is an amazing dragon." said Fishlegs in a longing tone, before turning to see a jealous expression on Meatlug's face, "Until I met you girl! There is no other dragon I would rather ride with than you!" As Fishlegs said this he rubbed Meat lug affectionately (much like how a boyfriend smother affection on his girlfriend to keep out of doghouse)!

"Should we leave the happy couple alone?" asked Ruffnut mockingly, while she and her brother laugh mockingly. Thinking she was speaking of him, Ameilianus instantly stood up and cleared his throat, somewhat embarrassed by his actions.

"My apologies, Hiccup. It's just I have never seen a dragon quite like Toothless before!" stated Ameilianus honestly.

"Wait so you have seen other dragons?" asked Hiccup hopefully. Despite knowing that there had to be other dragons out there, to hear from someone who had done an extensive amount of traveling was something else entirely.

"Of course! I have not only seen the many of the dragons of Archipelago, I have seen and recorded what is known about the dragons of Britannia and the Emerald Isle! I have even heard of many new types of dragon who live only on the Mainland!" explained Ameilianus, in the way a story teller introduces a story, "You and I could perhaps talk more of this later though. I still need to explain to your friends about the Greek fire!"

"Wait, Greek fire!" exclaimed Astrid, having heard of the legendary substance but not knowing what relevance it had to the Roman's arrival.

"Yeah, Ameilianus' ship is carrying about ten barrels of it, plus according to him the dragons can help make more." explained Hiccup briefly.

"Oh really how so?" asked Snotlout in a suspicious tone. He knew Hiccup loved the dragons more than anything and if Greek fire required dragons to die well then they could kick the Roman out!

And it looked like they might be able to, given how Ameilianus was nervously shuffling.

"Wellâ€|one of key ingredients to making Greek fire isâ€|.crushed dragon poop." Ameilianus whispered the last part embarrassed by the secret ingredient. It was so low that no one could hear it.

"I 'm sorryâ€|what?" asked Tuffnut, not being able to hear Ameilianus' answer.

"Crushed dragon poop." Said Ameilianus a little louder though still low enough that not everyone heard it.

"I sorry but did you sayâ€|?" asked Fishlegs thinking he heard it because he was closer but not quite sure.

"CRUSHED DRAGON POOP, ALRIGHT?!" exclaimed Ameilianus, obviously uncomfortable with the subject. He took a few deep breaths before continuing, "I am sure you have noticed how your dragons'â€|excrementâ€|have a consistency of a rock. Well, when crushed into a fine powder and mixed in with the other ingredients, it allows the Greek fire to \*\*only\*\* ignite in water. Otherwise, the substance just explodes when exposed to air!"

"Cool!" said the twins simultaneously, no doubt imagining the explosive force of the unfinished Greek fire. They had to remember to swipe some of the unfinished product themselves!

"So, now that we know what Ameilianus needs, everyone will have to gather their dragons'â€|droppingâ€|so that we can make enough Greek fire for the attack. Until then, you all can talk to Ameilianus and his crew about some general tips involving our dragons. Who knowsâ€|they might be able to teach \*\*us\*\* something we don't know about dragons!" said Hiccup somewhat jokingly, though already planning to talk to Ameilianus about what he knew about dragons, "Okay that's enough today. We'll meet back here tomorrow after breakfast to discuss the full defense strategy."

With that, the riders and their dragons began to make their way homeâ€|except Snotlout. "Hiccup could I talk to you outside for a moment?" asked Snotlout, looking upset at the turn of events. As he and Hiccup, along with their dragons, left the Arena, the only ones left in there were Ameilianus and his pet cat Caligulaâ€|along with a Terrible Terror. Spotting the tiny dragon, Caligula held a predatory look, but did not move until his owner nodded his head!

Stealthily and silently Caligula stalked his prey! The Terrible Terror was completely unaware of the danger, having had no natural enemies on the island! As Caligula crept closer, the tiny dragon was transfixed by a particularly interesting dust mote! The shadows on the wall showed how Caligula reached with an evil smile on his faceâ€| What is heard next is the cat and the dragon struggling until the dragon gives his final breath! The scene fades to black on Ameilianus' face, \_sporting an \_\_\*\*evil grin!\*\*\_

Disclaimer: I don't own DreamWorks Dragons franchise or the book series it is based off of. Truthfully, I hate saying that as I love the series so! Oh I should mention I did some revisions of the last two chapters! Apparently, I was misspelling Snotlout and his family's last name! Don't be afraid to point out my spelling mistakes! I

really appreciate it! Anyway, please read and review!

1 Truthfully the Valkyrie were simply spirits who collected the honored dead in Valhalla. Ameilianus is working off of incomplete information about the Vikings

2 Truth be told, Caligula did start out as a nickname! His real name was Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus Germanicus. He earned the nickname for when he accompanied his father's troops during their campaigns in Germania because his mother dressed him up in Legionnaire uniform to associate with the troops. The nickname stuck with him his whole life!

3 In case any of you didn't guess, Toothless is my \*\*favorite \*\*of all the dragons in the series! The animators did an amazing job with this dragon and I just can't take my eyes off him when he's on screen! I truly hope I managed to write him out correctly!

## 5. Chapter 5

### Chapter Five: Faulty Suspicions, Real Treachery

Hiccup and Snotlout were halfway done the path to the village when Snotlout stops Hiccup for a 'chat.' "Hiccup, you can't trust this guy!" declared Snotlout in a demanding tone.

"Look Snotloutâ€|my dad told me about the history has with the Romans. What happened to your great grandfather was tragic. But you have to realize that it happened to him, not you! Ameilianus wasn't even born at the time the attack happened!" pleaded Hiccup, hoping Snotlout would understand and see reasonâ€|which he didn't!

"This is my family honor, Hiccup! I can't forgive and forget something like this!" exclaimed Snotlout, indignant about Hiccup's response.

Sighing, Hiccup tried a different angle of argument, "Well, the village has to honor the traditions of friendly visitors to the village! Until Ameilianus or his crew do something that threatens or insults the village, my dad can't just kick them out!"

Snotlout look down in defeat, before looking up with a mischievous grin on his face and said, "Yeah Hiccup, I get exactly what you mean!" With that, Snotlout climbed onto Hookfang and rushed off into the village with a plan in mind.

"Snotlout WAIT!" yelled Hiccup, hoping to keep Snotlout from doing something stupid. Either Snotlout did not hear him or was not even paying attention because he continued to rush off to the village with Hookfang. Looking to Toothless for help, they were about to ride off when Ameilianus showed up behind them!

"Hiccup, there you are! I was hoping to talk to you about something!" exclaimed Ameilianus, waving to get Hiccup's attention. Unfortunately he and his cat Caligula were blown back by Toothless taking off.

"Sorry, can't talk right now! I'll see you at the Great Hall later!" yelled back Hiccup as Toothless took after Hookfang and Snotlout. In

his rush to catch Snotlout, Hiccup did not notice that Caligula had \*\*blood \*\*on his paws and teeth, nor that Ameilianus was carrying a \_\*\*bloody pouch \*\*\_on his beltâ€!

The wind rushed through Hiccup's hair as he and Toothless rushed to catch Snotlout. Toothless was the fastest dragon around, but Hookfang had a head start on him! Twisting and turning, bobbing and weaving, only to find that Hookfang had already landed outside the Great Hall! Jumping of Toothless as he came in for a landing, Hiccup ran over to Astrid who was right outside the entrance and asked worriedly, "Have you seen Snotlout?!"

Giving Hiccup a funny look because of how panicked and exhausted he seemed, Astrid replied, "Uh, I just saw him go insideâ€|why?"

"Long story. Let's just say I think Snotlout may have misinterpreted something I said to keep him from fighting with Ameilianus!" explained Hiccup, in between panting from riding hard to the Hall.

"Snotloutâ€|misinterpreting what you said? \_Noooo.\_" Said Astrid, in a sarcastic tone, as she knew Snotlout only ever hears what he wants to hear, "Look, I'll try to get the other riders to keep him from doing somethingâ€|\_Snotloutish\_. Just catch your breath and go inside, I'm sure your dads expecting you inside." And with that, Astrid left Hiccup to catch his breath and went inside.

Finally able to breathe properly, Hiccup rushed inside! Unfortunately, any chance at find Snotlout himself had already passed, as the packed Hall made finding anyone person difficult to say the least! The Great Hall was Berk's main building for everything from feasts, holiday, strategy meetings, and just general gatherings. Thus it was capable of fitting just about everyone in the villageâ€|which is exactly what seemed to crowd the Hall at this very moment!

"HICCUP!" shouted Hiccup's father, Stoick, from the main table. Gesturing for Hiccup to come sit by him, Hiccup did so and then Stoick asked, "So how are things going with Ameilianus?"

"You know most of my friends seem okay with himâ€|except for Snotlout!" explained Hiccup, while looking around to see if he could find Snotloutâ€|which he couldn't!

Sighing, because he felt he already knew the general answer to the next question, Stoick asked, "What's Snotlout done this time?"

"It isn't so much what he did as to what he's about to do." Explained Hiccup, "You see I was explaining to him why we couldn't just kick out Ameilianus and his crew (mostly by citing the tradition involving guest) and now I \_think\_ Snotlout is going to try to find some way to pick a fight with Ameilianus!"

Sighing, yet again, Stoick stated, "Unfortunately, until Snotlout tries something, we can't do much of anything. The good news is that from what I can tell from Ameilianus' crew, they have been the perfect guests! Truthfully, I expected some rowdiness from being out at sea so long, but I have heard a single complaint from the village. I think Snotlout may have more trouble with his plan than he thinks he will."

It was Hiccup's turn to sigh, this time in relief! Maybe he didn't have to worry about whatever Snotlout was doing; usually his plans were only a tiny bit smarter than anything the Twins came up with, and that's saying something! Besides, Ameilianus seemed fairly easy going, able to win over anyone in one conversation! What could Snotlout possibly do to set him off?

Just then, Gobber came walking over with one of Ameilianus' crewmates. The man was wearing heavy leather boots with brown leather pants and a black cotton shirt and a vest of grey wolfs fur. He stood a head taller than Gobber and was built like he was made out of solid, straight oak. The strangest thing about him was the color of his skin: a rich dark brown that Hiccup had never seen on another person before!(1)!

"Ah Hiccup! Stoick! I wanted you to meet this new friend I made from the new ship in the harbor!" introduced Gobber a little loudly (possibly a little drunk), "He's the first mate to that Ameilianus kid! Funny, always thought he was a little young to be in charge of a ship, even a beat-up old one like that one! HAHAHA! Anyway, this guy's name isâ€|isâ€|oh I sure he told me once!"

"It's Minos." explained the newly introduce Minos, in a voice that sounded like well oiled leather(2), "and I would like to say on behalf of myself and the crew, that Berk has given a most warmed welcome indeed!"

Somewhat taken aback by the appearance and friendliness of the stranger, Hiccup and Stoick were silent for the first few minutes. Working up the nerve, Hiccup finally managed to say, "Sorryâ€|.it's justâ€|"

"You have never met someone like me before." stated Minos simply, obviously having gotten that reaction before, "It is alright. Most people of the North areâ€|unfamiliar with the Dark Continent.(3)"

"Dark Continent?" asked Hiccup, both intrigued and confused, as he had never heard of such a place before.

"To the south of old Rome lays a massive continent, filled with what to you would be considered new and exciting things. My family originally came from this land, only to become slaves of Ameilianus' family. When they left Rome, they took my family with them." explained Minos in an even tone.

Seeing the looks of distress on the Vikings' faces, Minos explained further, "I, myself, am not a slave. My family was freed after Ameilianus' family arrived in Londinium. I serve as his first mate of my own freewill."

Hiccup, satisfied with Minos' answer, decided to ask, "I know you haven't been to the 'dark continent' yourself butâ€|did your family ever tell you any stories about?"

Amused by Hiccup's enthusiastic desire to learn about his homeland, Minos chuckled and said, "I do know many stories of the Dark Continentâ€|but I know what you really want to know and, yes, from what my father and grandfather told me, there are indeed dragons. I

do not remember all of the details, though there were some tribes said to have the ability to tame the 'sky serpents' as they are known as there."

"What else can you tell me?" asked Hiccup eager to learn about another culture able to tame dragons. The only evidence he had about previous dragon taming was how the Bezerkers tamed Skrill to fight for them. Still, that incident with Dagur gave Hiccup hope learning other cultures methods of taming dragons. And now Minos was telling him about another place he might be able to learn from! (Okay, it was a long shot, but Hiccup was known for taking long shot when it came to learning about dragons!)

"Unfortunately, I do not remember the tales my family told in any sort of detail." said Minos sadly. Upon seeing Hiccup looking forlorn and disappointed, Minos said while smiling, "But I can tell you of some of the personal encounter the crew and I have had with dragons!"

Hiccup's expression instantly brightened and he sat up straight, like a child about to hear his favorite bedtime story! "In fact," added Minos in joyful tone, loud enough to be heard around the Hall, "on one trip through the Isle of Men, we came across the Horrifying Sea-Hags, a legendary breed of dragons known for sinking ships and devouring there crew!" With a gesture of his hand, members of Ameilianus' crew pulled out musical instruments, among them an accordion, fiddles and bagpipes. After tuning the instruments, a lively Highland tune began to fill the Hall, and Minos jumped on the table and began to sing:

"OOOOOOOHHHH!

One day me and the boys were all out at sea,

Sailing pretty as can be,

When doldrums popped out the blue,

Stuck us down tight as glue!"

A few seconds of flute music followed before Minos continued:

"Oh my how we did curse,

'How could this get any worse?!"

When what crawled up on the deck,

But the ugliest things straight from heck!"

This time it was bagpipe music that filled the gap, before Minos continued:

"These awful things were truly a sight,

On my worst enemy I would not send this blight,

Yet it seemed we would pay the price,

For this awful throw of the dice!"

It was at this point when the remaining members of Ameilianus' crew began to stomp and perform a lively jig! Clearly the Vikings were enjoying the song, either nodding their heads to the tune or joining in the dance. It was at this point when Minos continued the song with the crew joining in the chant:

"Sea-Hags! Sea-Hags!

No matter how bravely we did fought!

Sea-Hags! Sea-Hags!

No harm to theses beast could be brought!"

"HEY!" came a shout from the entrance to the Great Hall. It was Ameilianus, clearly upset about something! Minos got off the table, while Ameilianus walked over across where Minos had been sitting. He glared at Minos, before smiling and jumping on the table himself!

"You should have told me we were doing this song!" stated Ameilianus in a playfully chiding tone, before the music began where it left off and Ameilianus took over the song"

"It was quite by chance or perhaps fate,

That we were transporting bagpipes on this date,

For will I back up from this fearsome foe,

I tripped and the pipes gave an awful blow!"

With that the bagpipe player blew as hard as he could, to simulate the effect in the story! Allowing the audience to recover from the noise, Ameilianus went right back to the tale:

"The Sea-Hags, they did fall back,

Fearing the noise more than any attack,

So with this, I gave the order,

And with the pipes we repelled the boarders!"

This time the music were mostly bagpipes with the crew stomping on the ground, recreating pushing the Sea-Hags of their ship. Finally the crew began to sing again:

"Sea-Hags! Sea-Hags!

Truly they hated the old pipes!

Sea-Hags! Sea-Hags!

Again this tool I'll never gripe!"

The music returned to the originally tune though with accordion taking over. The Vikings and Ameilianus' crew were all dancing and stomping to the tale. And with this Ameilianus sang the final

verse:

"And just like that, like nothing at all,  
The northern winds came a call,  
We raced to shore to and told this tale,  
Through every glen and every dale,  
What is the lesson you may aaasssskkkkâ€|"

And with that a pause was given in the music, and everyone was waiting for Ameilianus to continue. And then the finish:

"Always brings some pipes for nautical tasks!"

And with that Ameilianus got off the table and sat down and Minos followed suit. The music played on for a few minutes after the story was done and when it ended the Vikings applauded! Ameilianus stood up and took a bow before returning to his seat, with a wide-eyed Hiccup, an amused Stoick, and a laughing Gobber.

"Wow." Stated Hiccup simply having no words to describe the performance. Gathering himself up, Hiccup then asked, "Did all of thatâ€|really happen?"

"Of course," stated Ameilianus simply before taking a dramatic tone, "The Sea-Hags were disgusting combination of fish, frog and sea dragon, which could shoot poisonous acid out of their warts and had long tongues to grab their prey! If I hadn't trip over those bagpipes, \*\*none\*\* of the crew would have survived!"

"So what other dragons did you-" began Hiccup before being interrupted by none other thanâ€|

"HEY! EVERYONE! May I have your attention please?!" shouted Snotlout over the din of the party, which quieted down, "I did like to make a toastâ€|to Berk's newest \_ally\_: Ameilianus!"

"Oh no." groaned Hiccup, because he knew that despite the friendly tone, that Snotlout's speech was going to end badly.

"Now, I know we haven't really gotten to know our new \_friend\_ yet, so I have taken it upon \*\*myself\*\*â€|to tell you all what he brings to the table!" exclaimed Snotlout as he got up on a table to be seen by everyone, "He comes to us out of \*\*nowhere\*\*, telling us how he \_snuck\_ out battle plans right from under Dagur the Deranged's \*\*nose\*\* (and what was he even doing on Berzerk Isle in the first place), \_and\_ he has a plan that can \_\*\*save us all!\*\*\_"

With this last statement said in a sarcastic tone, Snotlout paused to let the statement sink in before continuing, "Come on! Don't tell me I'm the only one who sees this deceitful Roman \_\*\*rat\*\*\_ for the shyster he is! We've all been through this routine before: Heather, Mildew, \*\*ALVIN\*\*! Are we really going to buy what thisâ€|thisâ€|Roman ship rat is selling?!"

It was at this point Snotlout started breathing heavily, fuming in anger that he even needed to say this! A shocked silence filled the

Hall, as Viking and stranger alike were shocked at the display! Hiccup looked over at Ameilianus to see that he was shaking with fury, before he took a calming breath and stood up! Ameilianus proceeded to walk over to and up onto the table Snotlout was standing on! Ameilianus looked Snotlout in the eye, a calm fury lancing out, but Snotlout had a confident look on his face, as if daring Ameilianus to hit him!

Ameilianus took a deep breath and said, "I forgive you." Stunned by the unusual reaction, Snotlout stepped back and the crowd murmured before Ameilianus continued, "I had the opportunity to speak with Fishlegs about your issues with me. I understand that your family's history with my people was most unpleasant. I also understand how much this island has suffered because of the treachery of others well-meaning or not. I understand where your anger is coming from and I forgive you because of it."

Turning around to face the assembled crowd, Ameilianus continued, "People of Berk, I suffer from the legacy that Rome has left on the world! They felt that their conquest was some way of sharing their greatness with the world! What an amazing lie that was!(4) I'm sure that all of you know that at the end of its days, all Rome showed were reasons to \*\*fear it!\*\* And it was that fear, which brought down \*\*any\*\* good the Empire had ever achieved! That is something I hope to change right here&right now!

"I know that there will be those who doubt my intentions! We have seen that here tonight! I will help you fight off Dagur's armada, to show the world that knowledge and understanding can stand against the forces that seek to drive our world back into darkness! We, together, shall light the world with hope and \*\*dragon fire will lead the way!\*\*"

After finishing his speech, a massive applause filled the Great Hall, as everyone was swept up by Ameilianus' speech! Well everyone but Snotlout, who was too stunned by his plan failing so spectacularly to react! Just as he was about to try and punch Ameilianus, Gobber (who somehow wasn't drunk anymore) grabbed him from the table and dragged him out the Hall! Stepping down from the table, Ameilianus proceeded to walk over to the exit, passing the center table where Hiccup and Stoick were seated.

Pausing and looking at Hiccup, he simply stated "I fear I must retire for the evening, Hiccup. I hope we can speak more about dragons tomorrow. Chief Stoick, I wish you a pleasant slumber!" Having said his goodnights, Ameilianus proceeded to head out the Hall and back to his ship. Hiccup was just glad that Snotlout's plan had failed; he did like how Ameilianus brought him down a peg! Stoick, on the other hand, held a look of concern on his face as Ameilianus left the Hallâ€|

Whistling a little tune, Ameilianus was practically skipping his way back to his ship; called the Legacy for those who read Roman language. Walking up the gangplank, Ameilianus' mood couldn't be betterâ€|before a shape fell from the rigging! Shocked and stumbling back, Ameilianus was greeted with a familiar sight! "I told you to stop doing that!" exclaimed Ameilianus, "You're going to scare me to death one dead!"

The figure turned out to be a young woman, slight older than

Ameilianus at twenty-two. She wore a red tunic that matched the shade of her wild crimson locks, and practical black pants with black boots. She had paler skin, like those found in Ireland or Scotland. She wore a mischievous smile that complimented the pale-blue eyes shining with mirth. This was Marlene, the lookout for the \_Legacy\_'s crow's nest and master of the rigging!

"You know a good scare gets your juices flowing!" said Marlene, with a light mischievous tone(5), "Soâ€¦how was the party?!"

"Pretty good actually!" said Ameilianus while dusting himself off, "Save for a little trouble from that \_Snotlout\_ boy!"

"Oh, poor baby," teased Marlene before continuing, "No doubt you shut him up like you usually do! Was he the only one to give you trouble?"

"Truthfully yes! I was actually expecting much more trouble convincing these peopleâ€¦with what we heard!" explained Ameilianus slowly adopting a sinister tone, before hear a soft meow behind him, "Oh goo Caligula! Did you bring daddy a present?"

Caligula proceeded to drop the bloody satchel from early, which looked even **\*\*fuller\*\*** than the last time it was seen! "Oh, who's daddy's little hunter? You are, yes you are!" exclaimed Ameilianus as he scooped up both cat and satchel, cuddling the bloody feline. It was interrupted by Marlene clearing her throat, showing that she was not amused by the scene!

"Oh, relax Maria," exclaimed Ameilianus as he carefully put his cat down, "I doubt they miss a \_few\_ of those Terrible Terrors!"

"I don't see why we need to **\*\*harvest\*\*** them at all! We have plenty of Greek fire for **\*\*all \*\*aspects of the plan!**" exclaimed Marlene, annoyed at what she saw as Ameilianus' cavalier attitude.

"It never hurts to have extra! Besides, they certainly won't let us harvest \_the other\_ ingredient we need for Greek fire, soâ€¦what they don't know, won't hurt us!" explained Ameilianus, with a confident smile.

"Well let's hope our \_friend\_ \_sticks\_ to the plan." stated Marlene simply, not trusting their \_friend\_'s patience.

"You sent off the message, right?" asked Ameilianus knowingly. When Marlene looked at him he said, "You are my lookout; I know you saw enough of the party to take a guess at what happened!"

"Relax, I sent a messenger bird after you left the party. We should hear from \_him\_ in a day or two, plenty of time to prepare." explained Marlene calmly.

"Excellent!" stated Ameilianus sinisterly, before seeing Marlene head-up to the crow's nest, "You know, you could sleep with \_me\_ \_tonight\_ if wanted."

"Sorry buddy boy, I prefer the open air. Besides, you know I'd prefer your little Valkyrie!" said Marlene teasingly before disappearing into the rigging. Left with just his cat, Ameilianus walked up to the railing, while Caligula climbed up next to him. Lying down next to

his owner (slave), Caligula fell asleep to Ameilianus' hand through his fur as they watched the full moon. Hearing dragons sounding off in the night, Ameilianus stared at the moon and said:

"One thing I said was certainly true: \_\*\*dragon fire WILL lead the way to the future!\*\*\_"

Disclaimer: I don't own DreamWorks Dragons franchise or the book series it is based off of. I wish I had the money to buy it; really I do! This is perhaps my longest chapter yet! Anyway, now that I have thought of it, I believe I may do a Brave/Dragons crossover in the future. Just wait until I am done with this fanfic! By the way, I made up the Hideous Sea-Hag song! Hope I did a good job, it was written purely on the spot! Anyway, hope you all take the time to read and review!

1 Yes, this character is African, meaning it would have been very unlikely for a Viking to have met or seen him. I just wanted to create a unique 'number one guy' for Ameilianus.

2 His voice actor would be Tony Todd, well known for his portrayal of the title character in The Candyman film series

3 I, of course, mean Africa. It was mostly unexplored except for the Mediterranean coastal area at this point in time.

4 Inspired partially by Zuko's speech to his father on "Day of Black Sun: Part 2"

5 I would imagine her voice actor as Nicole Sullivan, voice of Shego on Kim Possible and (hint, hint) Marlene the Otter from Penguins of Madagascar. Well this is fan fiction, so not all the ideas and names need to be original!

## 6. Chapter 6

### Chapter Six: Hitch in the Plan

Five days later, Berk was still in a frenzy, preparing for the invasions of both the Screaming Death and Dagur the Deranged! With the help of Ameilianus' crew, the defenses were set-up, from the standard catapults and ballista to the newly made scorpions and onagers(1), all along the ridges and docks in the main village. The dragon patrols had increased to twice daily, just in case Dagur decided to launch his invasion early or send a reconnaissance force. Dragon training was still being done, of course, and members of Ameilianus' crew (along with Ameilianus) were allowed to observe.

Relations between Ameilianus and the Vikings could not possibly be better! Ironically, because of Snotlout's attempt to turn the Berkians against Ameilianus, Ameilianus was able to put to rest any doubt the Vikings had about the stranger. Ameilianus quickly became the object of desire for many of the female population of Berk, except Astrid for whatever strange reason. Minos quickly became popular with the younger of Berk's residents, using his vast knowledge of folk tales and legends to delight the younger generation. He was not above giving out pearls of wisdom to the riders, though some (namely Snotlout and the Twins) listened to him

less than others.

Other member of the \_Legacy\_ 's crew met with near equal success in winning over the island's populace. Marlene, when she was not in the rigging or crow's nest of the \_Legacy\_, made a point to befriend the twins Ruffnut and Tuffnut and join them on theirâ€|more mischievous adventures. On a lighter note, Berk got a first-hand look at the power of unfinished Greek fire (though that was the last anyone saw of Mildew's old house)! Marlene could also be seen stalking Astrid, or as she liked to call it 'lovingly lurking in the shadows!'

Berk got to know the other members of the crew in a variety of ways! Hiccup got to know the man Ameilianus trusted most with mixing Greek fire: Lucius Faust. An Anglo-Saxon native of the Isle of Men, he was a tall, pale, rail-thin man who wore a faded brown dalmatic.(2) He had a long pointed nose, green eyes that seemed to see the world in a way no other man did, and a mop of brown hair. When Hiccup asked Faust how he came to join the crew, he related the tale as a priest gave gospel!

"Well Hiccup," began Faust, in a nasally voice filled with unabashed confidence and mirth(3) "it all began when just a \_wee\_ lad in the old monastery! My parents had left me there when I was very young. (Perhaps unable to take care of me, who's to say?) I was always a quiet boy, always studying and learning what I could, when one day I thought 'I could use what I have learned here to help other people!' When I was nay older than yourself, I set out on a journey to find a way to help others andâ€|well one thing led to another and here I am!"

"By making weapons?! Most monks would not see that as helping other from what I have seen." stated Stoick bluntly. Despite not agree with the Jorgenson family's prejudice toward Ameilianus, Stoick could not help feeling suspicious. It started, ironically, with the speech Ameilianus gave as a rebuttal to Snotlout's accusations. It felt less like a call for peace and harmony and more likeâ€|a general inspiring his troops before a battle! And how Faust answered Stoick's query next did not help either!

Faust's expression changed from a quirky inventor to a dead-eyed soldier as he replied, "Sometimes the \*\*best\*\* way to help people is to eliminate the \_thing\_ causing trouble! Like with Dagur! He's not called the \*\*Deranged\*\* for alliteration's sake after all! He's a mad dog! And dog's get put down!"

Stepping back from the fuming chemist, Hiccup and Stoick were surprising when his attitude did an abrupt 180 as he turned around and said cheerfully, "Soâ€|want to see how Greek fire is made?!"

"That'sâ€|okay. Me and my dad have a lot to do today. Maybe tomorrow!" said Hiccup nervously. Seeing Faust go straight back to work, Hiccup and his father decided it was best to leave him to his work. Exiting the makeshift chemistry hut Faust had set up on Berk, Hiccup took the moment to glare at his father and say, "What was that all about?!"

"Hiccup, I know you'veâ€|bonded with Ameilianus and his crew during their stay. It's justâ€|Snotlout was right about their story not making any sense!" explained Stoick bracing himself for the argument

to follow.

"Snotlout's problem with Ameilianus is from a hundred year old grudge!" declared Hiccup, angry that his father was taking Snotlout's claims seriously.

"Need I remind you of the trap Dagur set for less than a month ago? Or the Smothering Smokebreaths he snuck into Berk a few weeks ago! Dagur is not the type to just boast about a plan within ears reach of a stranger! And you know that!" said Stoick angrily, before calming down and continuing, "Look, I'm not saying that Ameilianus is working with Dagur. It's possible that Ameilianus heard some misinformation."

"If it was misinformation, than Dagur would have attacked by now." explained Hiccup, poking holes in his dad's argument.

"I am just saying, you know what happened with Heather. True, it turned out alright in the end, but Alvin had almost gotten his hands on training dragons. And then Mildew practically gives it to him! You just need to be careful of how much you show Ameilianus and his crew." explained Stoick.

Sighing, Hiccup replied, "Dad, we haven't really shown them anything involving taming the dragons. The most they get is a few facts about various dragons from Fishlegs, Astrid showing how to defend against dragons, and the Twins doing whatever it is they do." Sometimes the Twins would get some help on their pranks from Ameilianus' crew, either Marlene or the Bludgeon brothers.

The Bludgeon brothers, aka Rigbert and Mordecai(4), were possibly the only Viking members of the Legacy's crew! Born and raised in Iceland, these two rough and tumble fighters left their homes to go on an adventure and eventually fell in with Ameilianus' group. Rigbert, the shortest and stoutest of the two standing just a bit over Hiccup's head but with the traditional Viking build, was the most like of the two to get himself into trouble. Mordecai, standing at a head over Gobber but with a straighter build, while the smarter of the two was no less likely to cause trouble. Speaking of whichâ€|

"AAAAAAAHHHHH!" came two voices screaming over the roar of a Monstrous Nightmare. That's right, the Bludgeon brothers had stolen Snotlout's dragon, Hookfang! Among Ameilianus' crew, those two were the most vocal, downright pleading, for a chance to ride a dragon. But Hiccup, because of his father's orders and past misgivings, had always refused. Unfortunately, the Bludgeon brothers were **\*\*not\*\*** the type to take no for an answerâ€|

"Oh, great." said Hiccup dejectedly, having an idea that something like this might happen, turn to his father and said, "Dad, Iâ€|"

"Go on, son. We'll finish talking later." replied Stoick. As Hiccup mounted Toothless, who had been waiting outside the lab, and rushed off to stop the madness, Stoick couldn't help feeling envious. After the incident with Bing, Bam, and Boom, Stoick always missed riding Thornado, whether into battle or on a leisurely ride. Turning his mind away from those thoughts, Stoick made his way towards the Legacy hoping to have another word with its captainâ€|

"IF WE SURVIE THIS, I'M GONNA KILL YOU!" shouted Mordecai against the rushing wind. Still screaming, Hookfang twisted, turned, and spins through the air, trying to dislodge the annoying pair. While Snotlout was trying to hit on Astrid and the Twins were having their daily fights, Hookfang had been trying to take a relaxing nap. Only to awake and find that a pair of strangers (the Bludgeon brothers) had decided to put his saddle on and tried to ride him! No one rode him except Snotlout (and that was conditional)!

"HOOKFANG!" Hiccup cried out to the dragon, hoping to reason with him, "Follow me back to the Academy!" Reluctantly, Hookfang followed Toothless back to the Academy (mostly to get rid of the clingy humans). Arriving and calmly landing outside the Arena, Hiccup dismounted Toothless while Mordecai and Rigbert leapt off of Hookfang, panting from the rough ride. Finally catching their breath, Rigbert cried, "Thatâ€|wasâ€|. AWESOME! Can we do it again?"

Hiccup stared incredulously at Rigbert, taking in every detail of theâ€|lunatic! Rigbert was a few years old than the riders having a short, scraggly brown beard growing in that matched his wild brown hair on top of his head. His mud brown eyes had a crazy gleam in them, matching the excitement he felt. His apparel was typical of Berk, brown furry vest over a dirty yellow tunic and dirty covered brown trousers and boots. He looked like he never cleaned his clothes or even washed!

"Arrgh! I can't believe you! We almost died and you wanna go again?!" replied Mordecai in a tone of disbelief. Mordecai looked the opposite of Rigbert, with long blond hair and no beard. His sharp blue eyes showed anger and frustration at Rigbert's constant antics. He wore the same outfit as Rigbert but the tunic was still white and was nowhere near as dirty as Rigbert. This lead many people to believe they were not actually related!

"YOU!" came a shout from the entrance of the Arena. It was Snotlout, looking ready to kill someone. He was already mad that Ameilianus outsmarted him and that his crew had become well liked by the other Berkians. But to steal his dragon for a joyride?! In Snotlout's mind, enough was enough and if it wasn't for Astrid and Fishlegs holding him back, he would have started something alright!

"Snotlout calm down. I'm sure these two have a good explanation for all of this." said Hiccup, glaring at the Bludgeon brothers. He may not have wanted a fight, but he still was mad at what they pulled!

"Look, none of you wanted to show us your dragon skills, right? So me and Mordo-" began Rigbert before being interrupted.

"Don't include me in this! I told you it was a bad idea in the first place!" yelled Mordecai, not wanting to get blamed for Rigbert's stupidity.

"You still went along with it!" yelled back Rigbert before continuing, "Now where was I? Oh yeah. So, \_I \_figured it'd be easier to learn the dragon stuff \*\*ourselves!\*\* So, we snuck in while the others were distracted and tried out the Nightmare! How was I supposed to know it would go on a rampage?!"

"Man, that's stupid. Even we wouldn't have done something stupid like

thatâ€|maybe." stated Tuffnut, while his twin Ruffnut nodded agreeing with him. Hiccup sighed, because this wasn't the first time the new pair to the island had caused trouble. Whether it was with the Twins or not, the Bludgeon brothers had started fights, damaged property, and snuck into the Dragon academy who knows how many times. The property and the fights could be ignored since Berk was a \*\*Viking\*\* village; stuff like that happened almost daily. This, however, was too far!

"Lookâ€|we've had trouble when it comes to people learn how to train dragons. Since the \_Legacy\_ is going to be gone after Dagur's invasion, there's really no reason to teach you too much. But one thing I hope you learn todayâ€|never \_\*ever\* steal another rider's dragon!" declared Hiccup, causing the brothers to back up at Hiccup's resolve, "Now get back to the ship! I'll be talking to Ameilianus about this later."

As the brothers raced back to their ship, Snotlout marched up to Hiccup and shouted, "See! They're already trying to steal our dragons! You need to get rid of theseâ€|lowlifesâ€|before something else goes wrong!"

"Oh give me a break! What those two morons did is no different than what those two morons would have done!" exasperated Astrid as she pointed to Tuffnut and Ruffnut, looking like they were about to sneak a joyride on Hookfang themselves.

"Pay no attention to the two blonde Vikings in front of the Monstrous Nightmare!" said Ruffnut, in a voice like someone trying to hypnotize another person.(5)

"And besides, other than this and Marlene's creepy stalking, Ameilianus and his crew haven't done anything remotely suspicious!" declared Astrid, annoyed because the whole week, Snotlout had tried to convince Hiccup to get rid of the crew of the \_Legacy\_.

"Speaking of suspicious, has anybody notice how few Terrible Terrors there are lately?" asked Fishlegs, genuinely concerned at this new trend in dragon behavior. But of course, no one was listening to him.

"I am sick of having to say the same thing over and over again! \_\*That Roman brat is up to no good!\*" shouted Snotlout, somehow hoping an increase in volume made his point more valid.

"Okay Snotlout! Just answer me one question, and I might get rid of Ameilianus: what exactly has he done to deserve getting kicked out?!" exclaimed Hiccup, finally tired of hearing Snotlout say the same thing. At this point Snotlout struggled with his tiny brain to think up a reason, when he came to a startling conclusion: he couldn't think of one! Despite the brothers and Marlene, the crew of the \_Legacy\_ had been perfect guest! And even then, the antics from the three members were nothing that wouldn't happen on an average day in Berk!

Seeing Snotlout lowering his head as a sign that he had finally gotten through to him, Hiccup said, "Look, Snotlout. I get it! When your own father keeps pounding the same story in your head over and over, it starts being the truth. It was the same with me, my dad, and dragon fighting! I can only say that you need to judge Ameilianus by

his actions, and not how your family judges him."

Snotlout lifted his head, looking conflicted in a way he rarely ever was. Then his face hardened and he left the Arena in a hurry. Hiccup sighed, hoping this wasn't the start of another problem. Hiccup then turned to the other riders and said, "Okay, Astrid, Fishlegs, I want you two to do a patrol around Berk. It's possible either Dagur or the Screaming Death could arrive ahead of schedule. I'll be joining you shortly."

"So, nobody is interested in the Terrible Terror shortage?" asked Fishlegs under his breath as he mounted Meatlug, knowing he wasn't going to get an answer. For the last two days Fishlegs has tried to bring it up, while doing his own investigation. As he took off with Astrid, he decided after patrol to look around the \_Legacy\_. It was the only place he hadn't looked!

"Sooo, what about us?" asked Tuffnut after Astrid and Fishlegs had left, noticing Hiccup hadn't said anything to them.

"Look justâ€|make sure Snotlout doesn't cause any trouble today, okay?" said Hiccup hurriedly, as he and Toothless took off for patrol.

"Keeping trouble from happening, huh?" Tuffnut asked himself. It was truly a first for someone to give the Twins such a job as they were always the ones \_causing\_ trouble. After making sure that Barf n' Belch and Hookfang were secure in their cages, the Twins rushed off and started following Snotlout as stealthily as they could (which truthfully meant not at all, since they kept knocking things over). Ironically, they actually succeeded in their task because Snotlout knew he was being followed!

Back on the \_Legacy\_, the Bludgeon brothers tried their own unsuccessful attempt at being sneaky. Hearing the noise, Ameilianus walked on deck and calmly asked, "How did it go?"

After straightening up, Rigbert responded, "Don't worry, none of them saw us smuggle out \_this!\_" After saying his brief report, Rigbert pulled out from his vestâ€|the Dragon Manual!

"Ha-ha! Excellent!" declared Ameilianus, rubbing his hands with glee. Taking the book from Rigbert's hand, Ameilianus replied heatedly, "I was a little worried when I saw \_the out of control \_\_\*\*Nightmare\*\*\_\_ though!\_"

"Hey that was all Rigbert's idea!" exclaimed Mordecai shifting the blame.

"I just wanted to see if I could do it! Besides it also kept that patrol delayed long enough for-" Rigbert started to defend himself before being interrupted.

"Shush! The docks have ears!" whispered Ameilianus. A sharp silence followed as the co-conspirators as they looked around for spies. Satisfied at their privacy, Ameilianus continued, "Anyway, our \_friend\_ has unfortunately brought bad news. For some reason, the Screaming Death increased its pace! It'll be in Berk tomorrow!"

"What! Dagur still needs another two days to get his full fleet here!" exasperated Mordecai, knowing that their plan for Berk required the fleet and the dragon to arrive at the \*\*same time!\*\* Ameilianus wore a sullen expression, feeling similarly. Rigbert, on the other handâ€¦

"Wait, this could still work!" exclaimed Rigbert getting puzzled look from his crew mates, "It's simple! There's no way the Riders can win without our help right? So after we help them, we convince them to give us our own dragons!"

"What?! There's no way they'd agree to that!" declared Mordecai seeing the idea as idiotic.

"I think our friend maybe onto something." replied Ameilianus, "I already had several ideas to drive off the Screaming Death. The riders will feel indebted to us afterwards. When the fleet arrives wellâ€¦<sup>1</sup>the plan continuesâ€¦with us holding the power instead of our friend\_!" An evil grin began to form on Ameilianus' face, as thoughts of \_\*\*treachery and fire filled his mind!\*\*\_

Disclaimer: I don't own DreamWorks Dragons franchise or the book series it is based off of. These snow storms are becoming ridiculous! I hope this was the last of them! Sorry about the delay, hard to write when you have cabin fever. Also, my laptop has been acting weird, so I may need to replace it soon. The only thing I can definitely promise is that the next chapter will appear by the end of March! Anyway, I hope more people decide to read and review! I love my reviewers but I would like to hear from all of you (unless they're flames, back away!)

1 These are all siege weapons (stone throwing and arrow launching alike) prevalent during the Roman Empire to Middle Ages. You can look them up on Wikipedia for further details.

2 A long wide sleeve tunic worn mostly by clergy.

3 For Lucius Faust, Charlie Adler (voice of Ickis on "Aaah! Real Monsters!" and the "GI Joe: Renegade" incarnation of Cobra Commander and the film version of Starscream) is the voice you should picture! He is good for both unbelievably wacky and intensely serious characters alike!

4 Based partially on Mordecai and Rigby from "Regular Show." Using their voice actors would help.

5 I have no idea if there's a word or phrase for this, but please let me know!

## 7. Chapter 7

### Chapter Seven: False Savior

The morning sunrise on Berk was quite beautiful. The sun lights up the sky with bright warm colors of red and gold, a welcome break from the freezing nights. The dragons and Vikings of Berk stir from their rest, ready to greet the new day. All eyes were on the rising sun, no thought given to the dying night. So it certainly came as a surprise when a loud, deep, screaming roar could be heard coming from the

direction of the fading darkness!

Immediately, all eyes turned to behold a horrible sight: the Screaming Death! White as bone, body twisting in the air in a corkscrew, while the head remained focused on one target: Berk! The blood-red eyes gleamed with a feral hate and hunger, while the massive buzz-saw toothed mouth roared out the creature's challenge to Berk! Immediately, shaking off their weariness, the Vikings and the dragons all rushed into positions, the Vikings manning a siege weapon or tower and the dragons rushing to their riders! There was no doubt about it; Berk was in for the fight of its life!

"EVERYONE! Into position!" declared Stoick, guiding the Vikings in their defense of Berk. While Hiccup led the dragon riders, Stoick led the ground defenses as the Screaming Death approached. Despite surprise at their adversary arriving earlier than they had been warned, Berk had a history of suffering surprise dragon attacks.

Hiccup and the other riders were already in the air moving towards the white terror! Flying a V-formation with Toothless and Hiccup in the lead, the riders began their assault! Despite the surprise of the Screaming Death's early arrival, the riders had plenty of time to think up strategies to fight the deadly dragonâ€|though few of those strategies ever did more than distract the beast. For now, the riders could only hope to lure the dragon into the range of the siege weapons in place around Berk. Hopefully, the overwhelming force would cause the dragon to retreat until they come up with a more permanent solution.

"Ruffnut, Tuffnut! See if you get enough gas around it! Snotlout! Be ready to light it!" signaled Hiccup, starting the first plan of attack. Barf n' Belch, ridden by the twins, pulled ahead, spraying the explosive gas his kind was known for all around the Screaming Death in a giant cloud. The Screaming Death, confused by this action, did not even try to stop them, not seeing the danger. It was only after the Twins flew away that Snotlout and Hookfang ignited the gas causing a \*\*tremendous explosion\*\* that was felt all the way back in Berk!

"Whooooaaah." said the Twins, clearly in awe at the destruction they had helped create. Relief filled the ridersâ€|until the smoke cleared revealing the Screaming Death to be completely unharmed! To make it worst, the Screaming Death had adopted an almost smirk that seemed to say, 'is that the best you got?!' Unfortunately, it wasâ€|

"Scatter!" exclaimed Hiccup, knowing what was coming next! With a massively deep breath, the Screaming Death shot a stream of explosive fireballs at the group! With the speed and rate of a machine gun, the group was barely able to avoid the stream, catching the tail end of the explosions! Seeing its path cleared, the Screaming Death rushed off towards Berk! The Riders gathered around to come up with a new strategy!

"Well there's one plan out the door!" remarked Astrid sarcastically and scathingly. She had a feeling it wouldn't work when the Twins suggested it.

"Okay, uhâ€|Astrid, try to distract by shooting spines in its eyes!

Fishlegs, go down there and try to coordinate the catapults at that thing!" said Hiccup hastily thinking up a new plan. Hopefully this one would work! Nodding to hiccup, Astrid and Fishlegs went to their assigned tasks. Astrid and Stormfly used their speed and agility to shoot spines near the Screaming Death's eyes, keeping it distracted. Meanwhile, Fishlegs darted in and around the building calling out to the Vikings manning the siege weapons to turn their fire towards the Screaming Death!

So far the plan seemed to be working! The siege weapons seemed to be at least bruising the behemoth and it could not fire back while Astrid was keeping it distracted. Everything seemed to be going greatâ€œ until the Screaming Death pulled off another trick! Curling around itself, the Screaming Death unfurled suddenly, striking Astrid and her dragon as they weaving and bobbing around the behemoth! Seeing the annoyance knocked for a loop, the Screaming Death proceeded to fired spike shots at the siege weapons, knocking them out one by one! Afterwards, the Screaming Death turned its gaze at Hiccup and Toothless, somehow sensing they were the ones behind its current troubles!

"Of course." sighed Hiccup, thinking that the universe just **\*\*loved\*\*** to mess with him! The Screaming Death rushed towards the congregated Riders, screaming its trademark sonic roar! The dragons' sense of balance was knock out of alignment causing them to crash into each other, save for Toothless who immediately raced out towards the rock pillars, with the beast in hot pursuit! Weaving in-between the towering pillars of rock, Hiccup and Toothless were treated to a familiar chase as the Screaming Death simply **\*\*smashed\*\*** its way through the rocks just like last time!(1) This time, however, whether through luck or experience, none of the fall rocks dissuaded the titanic dragon!

Suddenly, Hiccup and Toothless found themselves outside the field of rock pillar in open sea! They stopped, hovering in mid-air while Hiccup tried to think up a new strategy, only for the Screaming Death to appear right in front of them! So, here they were, miles out to see, with no sign of help from Berk! As the mighty behemoth drew breath for the final attack, Hiccup and Toothless braced themselves! This truly seemed to be the end for our heroesâ€œ

Suddenly, a whistling sound could be heard, followed by an **\*\*explosion\*\*** right next to the Screaming Death's head! Shaking its head to clear its vision, the Screaming Death turned towards the direction of the explosion to seeâ€œa trireme! It wasn't the Legacy, no this ship looked like it had come fresh of the construction yard with a shiny new coat of paint! Angry at the interference, the Screaming Death was about to attack when Hiccup and Toothless to attack while the best was distracted! This continued back and forth, between Toothless and the ship, until the Screaming Death fell off, away from Berk, deciding perhaps it had enough for today!

Hiccup looked down at the trireme, with a cautious look, before turning Toothless back to Berk. Arriving at the ledge of the Dragon Academy, Hiccup and Toothless landed to be greeted by the other riders and Stoick. Stoick rushed over, hugging Hiccup, relieved to see Hiccup survived his confrontation with the Screaming Death. Realizing that others were watching, they quickly pulled back and acted nonchalant.

It was then that Stoick finally asked, "What happened, Hiccup? How'd you drive the Screaming Death off?!"

Hiccup looked his father straight in the eye and said, "I think we're going to have to ask Ameilianus if we want the \*\*full\*\* answer to that question."

And with that the riders and chief rushed off to find Ameilianusâ€| who turned out to be at the docks signaling to the trireme Hiccup saw fighting the Screaming Death! The ship looked similar to Ameilianus' shipâ€| in its heyday before Rome fell. Completing the looked was the armed and armored crew, which unlike the Legacy's crew, were wearing Roman legion uniform: a red tunic and red woolen trousers(2) with a simple metal helmet, a simple leather belt, and leather boots. Each member of the crew had a sword on their right hip. As they entered port, a gangplank was lowered and two men stepped off the ship.

One of them, obviously the leader, was a grizzled combat veteran with a scar on his right cheek and graying black hair. He wore the same uniform as everyone else on the ship, with the exception of his sword being on the left hip and he carried a long, shaped stick seemingly used for whipping.(3) The other man, young but eager to please, looked as if he was the pupil of the first man. Perhaps groomed to fill his position if something bad happenedâ€|

"Centurion Phallus! Optio Marcus! Thank the gods you arrived so promptly!" said Ameilianus aloud; perhaps knowing Stoick and the riders were approaching. The named centurion and optio saluted by pound there right fist on their hearts and extending their arms forward at an angle to the ground. Stoick and the riders marched up to Ameilianus, who turned around to greet them.

"Ah Stoick, glad that you're here. I wished to introduce Centurion Phallus, captain of the good ship Jupiter's Might, and his second in command Optio Marcus!" introduced Ameilianus, as if presenting old friends to new friends. The Romans gave a curt nod, which Stoick returned before turning to Ameilianus.

"When exactly were you going to tell us you had another ship coming in?" asked Stoick suspicious of the new arrivals.

"The truth is, Stoick, I wasn't exactly sure when they would arrive. I sent a message to my parents to send a ship to support me after I found out about Dagur's plot. I was worried they wouldn't arrive on time; when instead their timing couldn't have been more perfect!" exclaimed Ameilianus, excited to see help had arrived.

"What exactly did they shoot at the Screaming Death? I have never seen anything like it!" Hiccup asked, wondering about the new weapon the ship had brought with them.

Ameilianus smiled, sensing an opportunity, "Let me just get everything settled and I'll meet you in the Great Hall to explain!"

A few hours later at the Great Hall, a large clay orb the size of a man's head and a brown leather bag was placed on the center table! "Once my people had settled down in Londinium, we began experimenting

with some of the weapon idea we had brought with us from Rome. Greek fire was merely the first of our reinventions! You see, Rome had been doing trades with the Eastern Kingdoms before its fall and the Byzantines are still doing it. But one thing we acquired from Rome's fall was still in the process of being perfected: \*\*black powder!\*\*<sup>(4)</sup>"

With that Ameilianus poured the self named black powder on the table in a small pile. He then went to the fire in the middle of the Hall and light a torch. Walking back to the table, after his men move the orb and bag off the table, and readied to drop the torch on the pile! "You might want to stand back." stated Ameilianus calmly before dropping the torch on the pile!

\*\*BOOM!\*\* A massive explosion erupted from the pile, leaving a scorch mark on the oak table and causing the Vikings to jump back! Looking at the spot with apprehension, the Vikings were clear impressed with the power of the substance, leaving Ameilianus an opening to continuing explaining, "We've also used the years since Rome's fall to think up new applications for the two substances. Using a metal tube on the ship, we use the explosive force to propel this shot," explained Ameilianus holding up the clay orb, "filled with unrefined Greek fire, which I am sure you already learned, is highly explosive in its own right!"

"Hold on a minute!" exclaimed Snotlout, clearly confused by something, "If you have Greek fire and black powder, why aren't you, like, trying to rebuild Rome or something!"

Sneering at Snotlout for interrupting, Ameilianus none the less addressed his question, "Like I told you about the Greek fire, the trouble with making black powder is finding the ingredients! The best place to get them is a volcano or a hot spring. Until we address the supply problem, my parents areâ€|reluctant to use either Greek fire or black powder unnecessarily."

Stoick thought over what Ameilianus said and couldn't find any way to refute his argument. "Alright," said Stoick, having come to a decision, "thisâ€|new weapon will need to be addressed before Dagur and his armada come tomorrow. So I'd like you and the centurion to stay hear while we discuss new plans to deal. Hiccup, you stay here. The rest of you dismissed!"

With that, the riders excluding Hiccup left the room while the various tribal officials discussed plans for tomorrow. Snotlout looked back only for a second, but what he saw only aroused more suspicion! While the Centurion was talking to the council and Hiccup, Ameilianus was hanging back, waiting for something. It turned out to be his cat Caligula, holding a bloody satchel in his mouth and leaving bloody paw prints!\*\*

Acting nonchalant about the blood, Ameilianus picked up his cat and wiped the blood of the floor and the cat! Snotlout immediately left the Hall, trying not to look suspicious. He wasn't quite sure about what he saw but he knew one thing. Ameilianus was up to no good!

Several hours later, while all of Berk was asleep, Ameilianus walked into the woods with his cat on his shoulders. Calmly, but quietly, he made his way deep into the woods. After an hour's walk, he reached a

secret cove on the far side of the Isle of Berk. This cove, in fact, already had an infamous history(5)â€|

Dodging to the right, Ameilianus barely dodged an ax that had been thrown at him! Seeing the ax in the tree, he turned his eyes into the direction it had been thrown to seeâ€|Alvin the Treacherous, former leader of the Outcasts! "You're late!" said Alvin in a gruff tone, similar to rocks grinding together.

"Apologies, but the meeting took longer than I thought it would." stated Ameilianus calmly, seemingly ignoring the ax thrown at his head.

Walking over and pulling his ax from the tree, Alvin turned to Ameilianus and asked, "Soâ€|what's the situation?"

"They still refused to let any of my crew ride dragons, but they are willing to use my weapons, soldiers and ships to fight off Dagur's armada." Explained Ameilianus, "With any luck, we can defeat that Berzerker brat and then turn on the weakened Berk fairly easily. All thanks toâ€|your anonymous contributions to the campaign."

Alvin took a moment to chuckle wickedly before replying, "Ol' Stoick gonna be shocked to see me againâ€|almost as shocked as when Dagur feels that knife Savage is gonna put in his back!" This started both the villain laughing up a storm! Even Caligula decided to join in on the raucous, with a hissing snicker!

After taken a moment to calm down, Alvin took one look into the forest and asked, "You know one of those dragon rider brats has been spying on us the whole time right?"

"Don't worry, I have Marlene on it already." stated Ameilianus simply, before the sound of Snotlout being knocked out could be heard, along with the squealing roar of Hookfang being tied up, causing Ameilianus to add, "Oh, I also made sure the Bludgeon brothers could help out." With that Marlene dragged in Snotlout, unconscious, and the Bludgeon brothers brought in Hookfang, tied and gagged to a cart.

"Well, I'll give ya thisâ€|you hired quality help." said Alvin, clearly impressed.

"What do we do with them?" asked Mordecai indicating the rider and the dragon.

"Hide the dragon in a cave. Keep the entrance blocked, but with enough air so he can survive. It would be a shame to lose such aâ€|\_magnificent\_ dragon. As for \_\*\*him\*\*\_â€|" explained Ameilianus, sneering at Snotlout, clearly hating him for existing, "Tie him up and throw him in a row boatâ€|without the oars! He can float out to sea, never seeing his home again!"

"Oh, you really don't like that kid do ya?!" asked Alvin, as Snotlout and Hookfang were hauled away.

"Thatâ€|\_\*ignorant\*\*\_ little wormâ€|is a symbol of everything wrong with this world!" said Ameilianus seething, "An imbecile how believes that might makes right, even after Hiccup showed him the power of an intelligent mind! People like him and Dagur will be the

\*\*first to go\*\* when I build my empire! Strength alone gets you nothing! That's how my father taught me to survive and I'd say it is pretty sound advice don't you?"

Laughing sinisterly, Alvin walked over to Ameilianus and gave him a friendly pat on the back (still a fairly strong one though).

"Ameilianus, I'd say this is the start of a beauuutiful friendship!" As Alvin continued laughing, \*\*a sinister grin formed on Ameilianus' face!\*\*

Disclaimer: I don't own DreamWorks Dragons franchise or the book series it is based off of. SURPRISE TWIST! Bet you didn't see that coming did ya! Truth be told, this little twist was something I just thought up! Anyway, sorry for the delay, cabin fever (among other things) once again robbed me of my creativity. Anyway I am going to be getting a new computer soon (probably next week), so there will be another delayâ€|sorry. Also, some of details I give about the Roman soldiers won't be completely accurate but we can chalk that up to the fall of Rome. Please read and review, I need your love!

1 This is a call back to the episode "Tunnel Vision" the premiere episode for the Screaming Death.

2 Called braccae back in the day.

3 A vitis, symbol of a centurions authority and used as a way to deal out punishment.

4 Technically black power wasn't prevalent in Europe until the 13th century. I meddled with history on this one to give Ameilianus a new toy to play with!

5 This is the cove Alvin used to sneak onto Berk in "Alvin and the Outcasts."

## 8. Chapter 8

### Chapter Eight: A Hollow Victory

A new day had come and gone on Berk! This time, the light of a setting sun was shining over the island; cast a blood red and purple glow. Berk had finished repairing the siege weapons damaged or destroyed in the Screaming Death's attack. The Jupiter's Might was hidden behind a rock formation, ready to surprise Dagur's Bezerker Armada. All of the dragon riders and their dragons were hidden along the cliff edgeâ€|well almost all of them!

"Heyâ€|has anyone seen Snotlout? I haven't seen him all day." asked Astrid in a whisper. Yes, Snotlout was still missing and no one had seen him! Most of the riders assumed he was fuming at the Roman's rising popularity in the village. While Stoick and Hiccup had started to become truly suspicious of Ameilianus and his web of 'coincidences,' the average citizen of Berk was simply grateful for his help. What would happen after Berk and the Romans beat back the Bezerkers was still up in the air.

"Don't know. Ain't seen him since that new buncha Romans showed up." said Tuffnut, truly clueless, "What about you Fishlegs, you seen him?"

"I don't normal associate with Snotlout that much." admitted Fishlegs, "Besides, I been looking into the shortage of Terrible Terrors, and I think I'm onto something. You see-"

"Later Fishlegs! We got incoming!" exclaimed Hiccup quietly motioning to the horizon. Already, Dagur's fleet could be seen coasting in at a slow pace in the light of the sunset. Dagur had apparently made no attempt to hide his vast armada's approach, perhaps too sure of his victory. Not that there was a doubt it could have conquered Berk; in total, there were about one hundred ships in Dagur's navy, with up to twenty to fifty Bezerkers or Outcast per ship. A sizable force for any occasion!

"Alright everyone, remember the plan. As Dagur's fleet closes in past the pillar, the Jupiter's Might will come out blast its weapon into the fleet. In the confusion, we'll swoop down and set as many of the ships on fire as possible. Dagur and his men will have to swim to shore, where they'll be met by my dad and his men. All in all, we should suffer no causalities in this attack." explained Hiccup, sounding sure of the plan's success.

"Seems like a good ideaâ€¦butâ€¦" started Astrid nervously.

"Dagur's not an idiot! How do we know he isn't landing something on the other side of Berk?!" questioned Ruffnut, showing she was the smarter of the Twinsâ€¦by a smidge.

"We've got Ameilianus and his men keeping an eye in that direction. If something goes wrong, it on them." answered Hiccup simply. Although Hiccup respected Ameilianus in the beginning, too many surprises had turned up for Hiccup to ignore. The arrival of the Jupiter's Might was too perfectly timed to be a coincidence! Not to mention that Ameilianus had little to no trouble dealing with all the grief Snotlout gave him! It was almost like he expected Snotlout's attitudeâ€¦

Hiccup was interrupted from his thoughts by the sound of explosions! Looking back down into the harbor, the Jupiter's Might had started attacking the lead ships in Dagur's Armada early! The plan was for the ship to wait until at least ten ships had passed beyond the rock formationâ€¦into the range of the prepared siege weapons and other surprises! However, the trireme was still causing devastating damage to the Armada, sinking eight ships with its black powder weapon while dodging the returning catapult fire.

Hiccup reluctantly gave the signal for the rider's attack. This change would also complicate their role as well. Now, Dagur's men had a few more seconds to align their crossbows at the dragons. Not to mention, Snotlout's disappearance would leave them short a dragon for the plan! Still, there was nothing they could do about it now except follow through.

Despite the earlier hitches, the plan was still going well! The Jupiter's Might was proving to be devastating to Dagur's forces! Before the dragon riders arrived, the ship and its crew had scored an impressive twelve kills with another two on the way. It was not coming out unscathed, however; Dagur's crossbowmen had killed half a dozen legionnaires and the sails were getting holes punched through them. This all changed when the dragon riders started their

attack!

Hiccup started them off with a shot at Dagur's flagship in the center of the fleet. The main mast was blown off, stranding Dagur, and in his anger he ordered his men to fire on Hiccup, which only lead to the shots falling on his own fleet! Fishlegs and Meatlug turned into one-shot sinkers, with the lava balls burning straight through any ship they hit. And when the catapults firedâ€|Meatlug \_ate the shots\_ and fired them right back at the offending ship!

The Twins and their dragon were getting a piece of the action themselves! With Barf's gas, they were able to disorient the crews of the ship they attack. With Belch's sparks, they light the gas and cleared off many of Bezerker ship's decks! Astrid and her dragon Stormfly were forced to use their abilities moreâ€|\_creatively\_. Despite the heat of the fire blast, Stormfly could not sink a ship like Meatlug, but he could do as Toothless did and destroy mast and catapults and the spine shots disabled more than a few Bezerker or Outcast!

All in all, the combined effort took out nearly a third of the fleet, with fifteen sunk and twenty without their mast, weapons, or crew! Despite their success, the dragon riders and the \_Jupiter's Might\_, the fact of the matter was there were just too many of them! Despite Dagur ordering his men to 'shoot down the dragons,' a large contingent (nearly half the fleet) simply bypass the fight and charge straight towards Berk! As this contingent of ships entered the harbor, all seemed quietâ€|perhaps \_too\_quietâ€|

"Now!" shouted Stoick, giving the signal to set off the trap! Vikings crossbowmen, with flaming arrows loaded, began firing shots into the harborâ€|though few of them hit the ships! The Bezerkers and Outcasts were confused: surely their aim wasn't \*\*that bad!\*\* The reason for the strange pattern of shots was answered when the arrows began to hit \*\*barrels\*\* floating \_harmlessly\_ in the waterâ€|

\_\*\*BOOM! \*\*\_With a titanic explosion, each barrel struck by the flaming arrows erupted in a surge of \_\*\*Greek fire! \*\*\_Flames shot into the air before covering the tightly packed enemy ships in flames! Panic spread among the enemy, who tried to steer away from the flames only the damage their fellows' ships or diving into the water only to realize that it offered no safe refuge from the flames! Those who managed to swim to shore were picked up by Stoick and his men to be placed in a holding cell (in this case, an old sea shack they barely used)!

Dagur was able to see the horrific sight and it filled him with unrelenting \_\*\*fury!\*\*\_ This was not what he expected at all when he came to Berk! From seemingly nowhere, the Berkians had pulled out new weapons and strategies which was devastating his fleet! It also seemed like the Screaming Death had done nothing to weaken Berk!

Turning to Savage, his Outcast second-in-command (and sometimes punching bag), and screamed, "WHAT HAPPENED?! You told me the Screaming Death had \*\*crippled\*\* Berk's defense! Does that looked crippled to you?!" he said while pointing to the burn ships in Berk's harbor.

Savage, strangely enough, did not seem worried despite both the

circumstances of the battle and Dagur's notorious temper. In fact, he looked out on the fleet as if everything was going to plan! "Milord, we still got enough forces to take Berk." explained Savage calmly to Dagur, "The fire will be out in the harbor and the dragons are running low on shots. We've already got the strange ship that showed up."

It was true! The Jupiter's Might had been seized during the battle after sinking a total of fifteen kills. The weapon had run out of ammunition and the sails were in tatters! Though the crew put up a good fight, they had little experience in a real fight and were captured when the Bezerkers boarded the ship. The enemy had just taken out the biggest weapon Berk had!

Dagur's mood brightened at the news of capturing the Jupiter's Might! Now he had an idea on how to turn the battle in his favor! "HICCUP!" shouted Dagur loudly to attract Hiccup's attention, "I HAVE YOUR NEW FRIEEENDS! IF YOU WANT TO SEE THEM LIVEâ€|I SUGGEST YOU AND YOUR RIDERS SURRENDER AND LAND ON BERK!"

Hiccup looked over at the Jupiter's Might and saw that Dagur's men did indeed have the crew at sword point. The worst part was that most of the dragons shots had been spent and they didn't have anymore surprises. Signaling to the other riders, Hiccup turned Toothless around and headed back to Berk. The others followed reluctantly and Dagur looked on with a twisted grin. He may have lost half his fleet (maybe more), but he finally had the Berkians by their bleeding hearts!

Moving himself over to the Jupiter's Might, since his ship had to be repaired, and lead his ships into the harbor! Most of the flames had gone down, with almost all of the ships that had gone in sunk or without crew! Maneuvering around the wrecks, Jupiter's Might docked with the harbor and Dagur walked down the gangplank with a cocky swagger, Savage close behind him! All of the most important people in Berk, Stoick and Hiccup among them, were gathered at the harbor to listen to Dagur's demands!

"Well, well, well," Dagur spoke with a confident, mocking, tone sure of his victory, "I have to sayâ€|I'm impressed!\_ Hiccup, I was sure I wouldn't lose anywhere near this many ships when I attacked Berk! Truly, I salute you as a war leader!"

"But, of course," all trace of joviality vanished from Dagur's tone as he continued, "this means I have all the motivation to burn down your village and put your people to the sword!" After he was done, Dagur breathed heavily, trying to reign in his Bezerker fury. Finally calmed down, Dagur glared right into Hiccup's eyes and made his demands, "If you want there to be anything left of your pathetic village by the time I am through, than I suggest you fulfil my demands:

You will surrender the secret to how you are able to train your dragons!

You will tell me where you hid the Skrill, because I know you didn't kill it!

You will hand over your Night Fury, because from now on: HEâ€|ISâ€|MINE!"

A hush fell over all those present as they waited for Hiccup's response to Dagur's unreasonable demands! The two stared each other down, neither flinching under the other's intense glare! Finally, after a long moment of silence, Hiccup responded, "You know what Dagur? I used to be afraid of you. I used to think of you as a wild animal that I had to be careful of crossing." After Hiccup said that, Dagur smiled, believing that Hiccup was giving up until he heard what Hiccup said next!

"But now I see you for what you truly are: a spoiled little brat who gets angry every time he doesn't get what he wants! So no Dagur, you won't be getting **anything** from me or my people! Because I'm not afraid of you anymore and truthful, I'm surprised I ever was afraid of YOU!" exclaimed Hiccup defiantly looking Dagur directly in the eye. Dagur, on the other hand, was to say the least shocked, but that shock quickly turned to anger as he prepared to draw his sword only to be interrupted by a slow clap coming from the roof of a nearby hut!

"Well I have to say Hiccup," stated Ameilianus from the roof, before jumping down to join the event, "That was a very impressive speech! Really inspiring! Don't stop on my account please continue!"

"Who, by Hel's frozen tits, are YOU?!" demanded Dagur, not liking the casual interruption by a stranger.

"Oh, of course, we've never actually met have we? I am Ameilianus Augustus Aemilius, Lord of Londinium, Slayer and Tamer of Dragons, Heir to the Nova Roma Empire, and most importantly Conqueror of Berk, the Outcasts, and the Bezerkers!" Ameilianus stated dramatically with a bow, as if on stage. Everyone was stunned by the stranger's haughty declaration, though the Berkians (especially Hiccup) were more concerned about the bit involving dragons! Finally, an uproarious laughter came from Dagur's direction forcing all to look at him.

"AHAHAHAHAHA! Oh, you had me going there for a second! 'Conqueror of the Bezerkers' HAHAHA!" exclaimed Dagur before calming down, "You know, you really know how to put me in a good mood, which is lucky! Because anyone else who told such outrageous **LIES** would have been fed to the sharks by now."

"Oh, everything I just said is the truth! Here let me explain your situation." Said Ameilianus, adopting the tone of a teacher, "You see, Dagur, you have lost almost all of your Bezerker warriors in their head long rush into the sea of fire! The people surrounding you, they're mostly of the Outcasts, isn't that right Savage?"

"Quite correct, milord!" said Savage, in a familiar tone. Dagur glared back at Savage before the look falter. How did they know each other?! thought Dagur worriedly.

"Oh, I see you are beginning to piece together the puzzle!" said Ameilianus as if about to say the punch line to a good joke or prank, "You see, before I came to either Berk or the Bezerker's Island, I came across an old friend of everyone here! ALVIN!"

With a mighty crash, Alvin the Terrible kicked open the doors leading

to the Great Hall and stomp dramatically outside! With a smug look of triumph on his face, Alvin turned to Dagur and said in a sinister tone, "He'lo poppet!"

Dagur stepped back with a look of shock and terror on his face. After all, here was Alvin, a man legendary for his cruel revenges, standing before Dagur after he thought he had slain Alvin! Tales of vengeful ghosts reappeared in his terror soaked mind! Perhaps the only one more shocked than Dagur was Hiccup! After all, he was there to see Dagur's treachery!

"Alvin?! Butâ€|how?!" asked Hiccup, shocked at his nemesis' return from the grave!

"Now don't interrupt Hiccup! My new friend still has a story to tell!" Alvin said to Hiccup in a merry tone, happy to see all his enemies at his feet!

"Thank you. Now where was Iâ€|" began Ameilianus, "Oh right! Alvin here told me everything I needed to know to catch up to current events around Berk! I headed over to Bezerker Island to recruit Savage and learn all I could about Dagur's plan. After that, I left Alvin to sort out things with his men and headed to Berk! I'm sure you can guess most of what I did after that!"

"Butâ€|the other shipâ€|?" asked Hiccup unsure of some of the details.

"OH right! You see I always planned on taking Berk! I had heard about the 'Dragon Conqueror' long before I came across Alvin! He just helped me toâ€|iron out some of the detail!" continued Ameilianus in his gloating tone.

"Oh it wasn't easy and a few things went out of schedule, like the Screaming Death's early arrival. But any true mastermind learns how to improvise when necessary!" admitted Ameilianus, still sounding confident.

Perhaps hoping to come out of the situation with his skin, Dagur spoke up, "Well this all sounds very complicated and cleverâ€|but you forgot one little detail! Sure, I lost a few of my men, but I still have more than enough to take you on!" With that declaration Dagur pulled out his sword and his Bezerkers did the same! Unfortunately Dagur's sense of triumph was short lived as these same Bezerkers turned their swords on **\*\*him!\*\*** Alvin and Ameilianus laughed uproariously at Dagur's look of surprise!

"Oh, I forgot to mention the fact that Savage manage to convince some of **\*\*your men\*\*** to support me! You see, Dagur, you were never really a good leader! Oh sure, you could come up with creative schemes and you had high ambitions, but other than that and your sword fighting, you never could excel enough to succeed in yourâ€|plots!\_" said Ameilianus, scathingly.

"Before anyone else gets any ideas of last minute heroics, I should probably mention something very importantâ€|I have rigged this village to explode!" stated Ameilianus simply, causing the inhabitants of Berk to gasp, "Confused? Allow me to explain. You see, along with the munitions for the battle, I had Faust create a little extra Greek fire and black powder to be put in casks around the

village! Now you're asking yourselves: where did he get the extra supplies for this? Wellâ€|here comes your answer!"

Ameilianus pointed in the direction of a dark alley, where out stalkedâ€|\*\*Caligula\*\* Ameilianus' pet cat! Only he was bring his master a giftâ€|a dead Terrible Terror! "You seeâ€|I wasn't being completely honest with you Hiccup. True what your dragonsâ€|providedâ€|did help in creating Greek fire, there is still one \*\*other\*\* key ingredient for the process!" explained Ameilianus as Caligula brought over the dead dragon. Picking up the ex-Terrible Terror, Ameilianus pulled out a small knife from his belt and \*\*stabbed it into the dead dragon's neck!\*\*

Shocked and appalled by the displayed, most looked away as Ameilianus worked his knife to removeâ€|somethingâ€|from the dragonâ€|except Hiccup! Thus, Hiccup was the first to see Ameilianus pulled out an organ no larger than a grape (huge by the standards of a Terrible Terror) from the dragon! "This little beauty," explained Ameilianus casually, "is where a dragon's fire breath comes from! There is no official name for it or the substance that becomes the fire breathe, but I have come to call the substanceâ€|\_\*vitriol!\*\_ The name is synonymous with \_hatred \_and I just love the way is soundsâ€| "

"Soâ€|YOU'VE been the one killing all the Terrible Terrors!" accused Fishlegs, being the only one to pay attention to that issue.

"Actually, that was more Caligula's work, but I did profit off it!" admitted Ameilianus with a childish glee, chuckling at Fishleg's anger, "Oh relax! You have much more important issues to worry about!"

"And so do you!" exclaimed Dagur, working up the nerve to make a point, "There's a reason Alvin is known as \*\*the Treacherous!\*\* How long do you think it will be before he turns on you!"

"Oh, I already have that issue well in hand." Said Ameilianus casual. As if being signaled, the centurions from the Jupiter's Might, how had been unrestrained sometime during Ameilianus' performance, ran up and restrained Alvin! Needless to say, Alvin was both shocked and confused!

"What's the big idea?! I thought we was partners!" demanded Alvin as his hands were tied behind him and he was forced to stand by Dagur.

"Did you actually believe I was some gullible chump you could lead around by the nose? I had Savage on my side since the moment we first spoke! The sad truth is Alvin, you \*\*and\*\* Dagur have something in common: you both failed to capture Berk much too often! He knows when to back the winning side, as I am sure you remember!" declared Ameilianus, pointing out Savage's early treason after Alvin was thought dead.

Ameilianus let them all soak in the situation. He had outmaneuvered everyone to the point where he was in control of the situation! "Oh, by the way Hiccup," said Ameilianus in a smug 'friendly' tone, "I do believe you have been missing \*\*THIS!\*\*" With that, he pulled out the missing Berk Dragon Manuel from his back! He casually tossed

it over to Hiccupâ€|as if it had no value at all!

"Faust has already made a copy of the original so you can have it back!" said as he turned awayâ€|before turning back and saying, "OH! In case you're wondering, the\_Legacy\_ and her crew set sail for Dragon Isle before the attack, so that we can get started on taming some new dragons!"

"We?!" asked Hiccup unsure if he heard that correctly.

"Yes Hiccup, we! Don't you see? People are under the mistaken assumption that muscle is all one really needs to get by in this world. But youâ€|you proved them wrong! Come on Hiccup! In Nova Roma, the intellectual capable will be the ones standing on top, not the barbaric savages! Join me Hiccupâ€|and we can make a world where people like you and me can truly shine!" declared Ameilianus dramatically, waiting to hear Hiccup's joyous acceptance of his dreamâ€|only for Hiccup to \*\*laugh\*\* at him, like he told the funniest joke in the world!

"Meâ€|join you?! HAHAHAHAHA! I sorry but that's just \*\*never \*\*going to happen!" said Hiccup, ending on a serious note.

"What?" asked Ameilianus, a look of shock and surprise on his face. How could Hiccup refuse thisâ€|vision of the future!

"Are you kidding me?! You're more treacherous than Alvin, more deranged than Dagur! Why would I EVER side with a lunatic like you? I mean, you can't seriously expect the world to just bowed down and kiss your feet just because you feel superior to everyone, can you?!" asked Hiccup, incredulous to Ameilianus' delusions.

Adopted a cold look of indifference, Ameilianus walked up to Hiccup, with the setting sun at his back and said, "No Hiccup. They will bow down and kiss my feet, because to do otherwiseâ€|\*\*is to BURN in dragon fire!\*\*" As he made this finally statement, the blood red sunlight seemed to shine in his eyes. Hiccup could not think of a witty retort, so he simply glared back at Ameilianus, showing that \_he\_ at least would not bow to this tyrant!

Stepping back, Ameilianus turned around and walked up the steps. Once he was at the top, he looked around hoping to see some kind of weakness from the Berkians. Instead he saw that same glare from Hiccup on each and every face in the crowd. Finally having enough, he looked down and said, "Very well Hiccup! Your whole village can suffer for your defiance! MEN! EXECU-"

\*\*BAM! \*\* A fire blast hit the ground knocking Ameilianus off his feet! Everyone was shocked! As Ameilianus got back up, he looked to the sky to see an impossible sightâ€|

"HEY AMY!" called down Snotlout on top of Hookfang, both leering at their enemy, "Miss me?"

Disclaimer: I don't own DreamWorks Dragons franchise or the book series it is based off of. Needless to say, last week was not a good week for me. The furnace shut-off for a couple of days and a lot of other problems piled on top of it. Still I persevered and I continue to write this story. The good news is I have a new laptop and it seems to work just fine (mostly). This is probably my longest chapter

ever! I will, unfortunately, take a little longer for my updates, because I have found I have made spelling mistakes in previous chapters. Plus, I still need to look for a job. Still, please read and review, I live for your supports!

## 9. Chapter 9

### Chapter Nine: A Pyrrhic Turnaround

It was a quiet, serene night on the Isla of Berk. The sky was clear of clouds, allowing a perfect view of the night sky in all its wonder. The temperature was unusually warm, a brisk forty degrees Fahrenheit, the warmest Berk ever got in the year! Truly this was a night for romantic interludes, moonlight walks on the beachâ€!

"HOW THE F%#\$ DID \*\*YOU\*\* GET HERE?!" demanded Ameilianus of Snotlout in an outraged tone. Previously, Ameilianus had just gloated about his plans to the entire village of Berk, along with the invading Outcasts and Bezerkers. After which, he proposed Hiccup and his people join his 'Nova Roma' to which Hiccup and all the Berkians refused. About to order their deaths, Ameilianus was interrupted by Snotlout's unexpected arrival, which should have been impossible because Ameilianus cast Snotlout adrift just the other night. And now we join the ensuing confrontationâ€!

"Easy. Hookfang here," stated Snotlout while petting his dragon's head, "flew over and found me! We raced back here to findâ€|well, this! Now we're gonna bring you down!" With this confident statement, Hookfang perform a loop and blasted the guards away from the Berkians. With that, the riders raced to their dragons and joined Snotlout in the sky, while the other Vikings raced to grab what weapons they could.

Ameilianus looked on the unfolding scene with horror and disgust! His plans were being foiled by the \_meathead \_of Berk! "Marlene!" shouted Ameilianus, signaling the hidden archer on the roof of the Great Hall. Marlene brought out her long bow and took aim with a flaming arrowâ€|and launching it at the armory! A massive explosion ripped through the armory, destroying all the weaponsâ€|again!

"Not again! Anotha batch of perfect good killing implements cut down before their time!"(1) bemoaned Gobber, upset to see another batch of weapons were destroyed before they could be used. Unfortunately, there was a more serious problemâ€|Ameilianus was not lying about rigging the village with bombs!

"Astrid, keep that archer distracted!" commanded Hiccup, while Toothless was hassling the Roman centurions with plasma shots. Astrid and Stormfly immediately went to the task by firing spike shots at Marlene! Marlene, however, with well-trained Hearing, dodged out of the way and fired here flaming arrow at Stormfly, who also managed to dodge the shot as well. Giving a small smile, Marlene began leaping from roof to roof, no doubt trying to light the other bombs!

"Oh no you don't!" stated Astrid, mostly to herself, before she and Stormfly went off in pursuit. Truth be told, Astrid had never liked Marlene, always snooping aroundâ€|even going so far as to peep every time Astrid \_bathed!\_ Weird right! Anyway, Astrid and Stormfly pursued Marlene closely as she leapt towards the bonfire that was the

armory for some reasonâ€|

"You're gonna need a lot more than arrows to bring down my dragon!" challenged Astrid as Marlene stopped. Rather than perturbed, Marlene smiled and reached into a pouch, pulling out a strange orb. Lighting it with the fire from the armory, Marlene tossed the orb at Astrid and Stormfly, who dodged itâ€|only to be knocked out of the sky by a tremendous explosion! Rolling to recover from the rough dismount, Astrid satâ€"up only to be met by Marlene's dagger!

"Like that!" retorted Marlene in a playful tone. Elsewhere, the battle was turning against Ameilianus' forces! Between the rested dragons and the furious, though \*\*weaponless\*\*, Vikings, Ameilianus' motley forces were having a hard time working together to stop the inhabitants of Berk! Looking around, Ameilianus saw a desperate gamble and decided to take itâ€|

"YOU TWO!" commanded Ameilianus as he approached Dagur and Alvin, who he had recently betrayed, "I need you to coordinate the Outcasts and the Bezerkers! Savage can't do both!"

Momentarily shocked at the gall Ameilianus was showing in asking \*\*them\*\* for help, Alvin put on a smirk and said, "And why should I help you? In case you forgot, you just \*\*backstabbed\*\* me not a moment earlier!"

Dagur decided to get in on the taunting by retort, "And you \*\*stole\*\* my men before that! What say we let Berk mop the floor with your traitorous face?!"

Knowing full well that they would not be willing to help him, Ameilianus counterpointed in an angry tone, "Here's what will happen if you don't help me: Either Berk wins and you spend the rest of your lives rotting away in cellsâ€|or I win, and I \*\*nail\*\* you both to the Cliffside as dragon bait!\*\*\_"

Taking a moment to process this, and getting over the shock of Ameilianus' death threat, the pair of tyrants came to one horrible conclusion: he was right! Even if Berk won, they would have to spend the rest of their days in prison! For Dagur, it would be the greatest dishonor in history! For Alvin, it would be the final nail in the age-old argument between him and Stoickâ€|with Stoick as the victor! There really was no other option for them!

"Soâ€|what is your plan now?!" asked Dagur in a snarky tone. Hey just because he was now working with Ameilianus did not mean he had to like it!

"Marlene will set off the rest of the explosiveâ€|they are designed to start a chain reaction if enough of them go off! The Berkians will have to divide their forces between saving their village and fighting us!" declared Ameilianus confident the plan will work!

"And you really believe that will be enough toâ€|\_re-conquer \_Berk?" asked Alvin skeptically of the plans success in that regard.

"Noâ€|this is about getting awayâ€|and leaving a big enough mark to haunt their nightmares forever!" exclaimed Ameilianus in a manically tone, "I already have a copy of the Manual and soon, enough dragons

to start my own little army! But theses fools will pay for my humiliation!"

"NOT GOING TO HAPPEN!" shouted Hiccup as he and Toothless dived bombed the would-be tyrants. The trio rolled out of the way of the dragon and Ameilianus rushed off to his troops, but not before giving Dagur and Alvin a pair of lite torches, made from the burning armory.

"Get your men to light up the huts! The fire will set off the bombs! After that, get to the ships!" commanded Ameilianus, which Alvin and Dagur reluctantly followed.

"Everyone, keep them from setting off the bombs! Riders, watch your fire! We don't wanna do their jobs for them!" ordered Hiccup before going after Ameilianus. This limited the dragon riders, but not by much. The twins Ruffnut and Tuffnut used Belch's gas the help disorient the enemy forces, though being sure to keep it away from the fires. Meatlug was knock over enemy troops with sheer brute strength, under Fishlegs coordination. Snotlout, however, was facing some difficultiesâ€¡

"GET OFF ME YOU OVER SIZED RAT!" yelled Snotlout as Caligula clawed at him and scrambled all over him. Yes, Caligula had decided that this was the perfect time to enact his revenge against Snotlout! The fact that it also distracted Hookfang from the fight, causing him to fly erratically (thus unable to help in the fight), was merely a bonus.

Astrid stared down her foe, will Marlene was giving a sly grin at her new prize! Astrid grabbed a piece of timber and threw it in Marlene's face, forcing her back a step! Immediately looking around, Astrid grabbed a half decent sword on the ground and charged at Marlene, only to be intercepted by Marlene's dagger! Reaching back to her quiver, Marlene pulled out a short sword and swung it at Astrid, who pulled back just in time to only receive a nick in her right hip! Reaching down to check her injury, Astrid glared at Marlene, who only smiled and flipped her dagger into a reverse grip and waited for Astrid's next move!

Back with Snotlout, Caligula was proving relentless in his assault! Finally, though, Snotlout managed to grab the cat by the tail and threw it off! Thankful for the breather, he turned Hookfang back to the battleâ€¡only to see Caligula had raced up to the roof of one of the huts and was about to jump back on Snotlout! "You have got to be kidding me!" Snotlout exclaimed, just as the crazy cat leapt back onto his face!

Meanwhile, Hiccup and Toothless had finally been able to catch up with Ameilianusâ€¡who somehow got his hands on one of the old dragon snare bolo launchers! Surprised and unable to dodge, Toothless was wrapped up in the snare, while Hiccup was thrown off his saddle, to land right at Ameilianus' feet! "You know Hiccup," casually spoke Ameilianus, "we truly are not so different!"

"Really, then why don't you \_enlighten \_me cause I just don't see it!" retorted Hiccup as he got to his feet, a little surprised Ameilianus had not drawn a weapon on him.

"We both use our minds to shape the world around, not try to muscle

through it asâ€œ|others have done." said Ameilianus, his distaste for the 'others' eminent in his tone, "You through the dragons, I thought my weapons and tactics. There is no reason we shouldn't be allies Hiccup!"

"Oh, other than the fact that you are working with Berk's \_sworn enemies\_ and are now trying to \*\*blow up Berk!\*\*" exclaimed Hiccup in a sarcastic tone.

"Really, Hiccup, think of the big picture! I don't intend on keeping thoseâ€œ|\*\*barbarians\*\*â€œ|in my service any longer than necessary! You and Iâ€œ|we could remold the world in our image! No more wars! No more ignorance! Through us the world will know a Golden Age like never before! So what do you say Hiccup?! Let's put our past troubles behind us and work as brothers to usher in this new dawn!" Ameilianus finished dramatically, while reaching out with his hand to accept Hiccup's in friendship.

Hiccup stared at Ameilianus' hand for a moment, thinking on what Ameilianus said. Finally, he made his decision, "No deal Ameilianus! It doesn't matter how bad the world really is, you can't \*\*force\*\* people follow a certain creed! That's what causes all the war and suffering you \_claim\_ to be trying to prevent! So I can safely say that you will not be receiving help from either myself or anyone else in Berk!"

Ameilianus' gaze turned hard after Hiccup was finished speaking, and quick as lightning, he pulled out a \_spatha\_(2) and held it at Hiccup's throat. "I truly wish you could see reason, Hiccup." stated Ameilianus calmly, as if taking a life was nothing new to him, "You and Iâ€œ|we could have been great together. Still, it really is a minor inconvenience. I have the Dragon Manual \_and\_ I believe I can convince Alvin and Dagur to hand over their own dragon training tips. You have cost me only a few months at most. Goodbye, Hiccup."

Just as Ameilianus drew back the sword to slice off Hiccup's head, a plasma shot knocked the sword out of his hands! Looking behind Hiccup, Ameilianus saw Toothless had somehow gotten himself out of the snare! "I taught Toothless how to get out of those snares months ago." explained Hiccup, causing Ameilianus to turn toward Hiccup, who had a smirk on his face, "You're not the only one to who can plan ahead you know."

Ameilianus roared with rage as he tackled Hiccup to the ground and began punching him! Surprised by this uncharacteristic turn in behavior, Hiccup took a few to the face before remembering the hand to hand training he had with the other riders. Although Hiccup was not physically stronger than Ameilianus, he was trickier especially in the enraged state Ameilianus was in. Slipping out between Ameilianus' legs, Hiccup turned and kicked Ameilianus in the back, before jumping on Toothless and pointing Toothless at the prone Ameilianus.

Meanwhile, back with Astrid, she was having significantly more trouble with Marlene. Using her dagger to parry Astrid's strike with the sword, while skillfully striking back with her own sword, Marlene was giving Astrid a 'death by a thousand cuts!' For while Astrid was able to keep the thrust and sweeps from being lethal, Astrid was starting to get tired from the battle and the blood loss! It all seemed all over untilâ€œ|

\*\*BOOM!\*\* Stormfly had sent a shot which sent Marlene off her feet! Astrid quickly rushed in and kicked away Marlene's sword and daggers before point her own sword at Marlene's head! "It's over \_Marlene!\_ Come quietly, and I might just let you keep an arm!" declared Astridin triumph.

Marlene just chuckled and said, "You don't get do ya, cutey! I'M JUST A DISTRACTION! Right now, Ameilianus is about to set off the bombs while you and all your tribes distracted!" exclaimed Marlene, before setting off a smoke bomb. By the time Stormfly could clear up the smoke, Marlene was gone along with her weapons! Knowing she had to find Hiccup, Astrid jumped into Stormfly's saddle and flew-off!

At the same time, Snotlout was still dealing with a truly obsessed cat! Struggling to both control Hookfang and get rid of Caligula, whole huts were smashed up by Snotlout's erratic flying! Having enough and willing to take his enemy with him, Snotlout maneuvered Hookfang over the bonfire that was the armory! "See you in Valhalla you mangy rat!" cried Snotlout as he jumped from Hookfang with Caligula in tow!

Luckily, Astrid and Stormfly were passing by at that exact moment! Snotlout dropped in right behind Astrid, who looked back puzzled at what had land in her saddle. Caligula, on the other hand, had let go off Snotlout during the fall, causing the fiendish feline to continue plummeting into the flames! "Good riddance!" said Snotlout, secretly relieved that Astrid had caught him.

"What was that about?!" asked Astrid not entirely sure of what just happened.

"Just an old score settled!" declared Snotlout, trying to play it cool, "SO what do we do now?"

Astrid looked around seeing that the Bezerkers, Outcasts, and Romans were in full retreat to the docksâ€¦except Alvin, Dagur, and Ameilianus! "We need to go help Hiccup! Something big is about to happened!" explained Astrid. With that, Snotlout, jumped back onto Hookfang and together they rode off in the last know direction of Hiccup! Meanwhile, from the burning ruins of the armory, a charred paw reached out from the fireâ€¦

Ameilianus was currently face to face with an angry Night Fury, barely held back by its rider! "It's over Ameilianus! You've got no more tricks left to play!" demanded Hiccup, still angry at the earlier conversation. Ameilianus, however, did not seem at all affected by the situation he was in. He simply turned his gaze onto Hiccup as if waiting for something.

"Well," prompted Ameilianus, "let's get this over with."

"What?!" asked Hiccup, not sure what Ameilianus was talking about.

"This is the part of the story where the hero applies the finishing blow to the villain, is it not?" asked Ameilianus as if it was the most obvious idea in the world. Upon seeing Hiccup's shocked expression, Ameilianus smirked and decided to press the issue, "You've never killed anyone before, have you? I mean, aside from the

Red Death, but you've never killed a person before! HAHAHAHA! That is just too funny!"

"I really don't think you're in a position to be making fun of me." stated Hiccup, Toothless looking equally annoyed at the enemy's enjoyment.

Wiping a tear from his eye from laughing, Ameilianus calmed down and with a confident smirk said, "I hope you're not under the impression that yourâ€|\_jail\_ could possibly hold me! Even if I don't figure out a way to escape, my parents, the leaders of Londinium, would send \*\*a fleet\*\* to get me back! You saw how much damage \*\*one\*\* of our ships can doâ€|imagine a \*\*hundred\*\*! Berk would never stand a chance!"

Ameilianus decided to let Hiccup process this thought before continuing, "You knowâ€|my father had a saying: the greatest leaders need three qualities; wisdom, visionâ€|and strength! You have wisdom and vision; \_\*\*you\*\*\_ are the only one who could have started the taming of dragons! But the one thing you lack is strengthâ€|not physical strength, but the strength to do what is necessary! You spare your enemies, hoping they will \_see the error of their ways! \_HA! You could have finished Alvin in your first encounter and saved yourself a world of troubleâ€|but instead you ran, WELL NOT THIS TIME!"

Ameilianus jumped to his feet, walking over to Hiccup and Toothless, who moved back to keep Ameilianus out of arm's reach. Standing straight, with a haughty look on his face, Ameilianus declared, "I will \_\*\*never\*\*\_ leave Berk in peace! You stand as a threat to \*\*my\*\* new empire! So to save yourself \_and \_Berk any future problems from meâ€|you're gonna have to kill me!"

Hiccup stood, shocked at Ameilianus' dare! Truthfully, Ameilianus was right: Hiccup tried everything humanly possible to avoid killing someone, especially when they couldn't defend themselves! Those situation always brought him back to when Toothless and he first met, when he had decided not to kill the dragon! But nowâ€|Ameilianus had shown himself to a serious threat to not just Berk, but to the world! He stared down at Toothless hoping for some reassurance or advice, with Toothless looking right back, seemingly saying without actually speaking; \_Whatever you decide, I'll support.\_

Sighing, Hiccup composed himself for a moment. Then he stared back at Ameilianus with a hardened look, while Ameilianus still wore a confident smirk, daring Hiccup to deliver the final blow! Though subtle clues lost to an observer, Hiccup had Toothless prepare a plasma shotâ€|aimed directly at Ameilianus!

"Come on! You know you have to! Come on!" challenged Ameilianus, no fear of death in his eyes! Toothless readied his shot while Hiccup looked on, his uncertainty growing! "Come on! Do it! DO IT! \*\*DO IT!\*\*" With that final challenge and a roar from Hiccup, Toothless fired his shotâ€|above Ameilianus' head! Hiccup had given a pull at Toothless' reigns at the last second, causing the shot to pass within inches of Ameilianus!

Rather than cowering or even flinching, Ameilianus stood his ground and stared at Hiccupâ€|and laughed uproariously! Calming down, Ameilianus had only one word to say to Hiccup: "Coward!" And with

that signal Alvin and Dagur appear and restrained Hiccup and Toothless, with Alvin putting a hood over Toothless' mouth and Dagur simply bear-hugging Hiccup!

With his would be executioners restrained, Ameilianus calmly walked up to Hiccup and said, "I knew you couldn't do it! It's just not in your nature! But don't worry, I don't killing you today!"

A surprised expression was worn by Ameilianus' impromptu audience before he further explained, "You're just too interesting, Hiccup! I could kill you right now and save myself a lot of future trouble, but then I lose a chance to become a legend! What would Scipio be without Hannibal! Caesar without Boudicca! Oh you and I we still have so many fights left ahead!"

Walking around as he talked, Ameilianus spotted a stray piece of wood from Toothless' near miss. It was still alight with flame a \*\*blue flame! \*\*Picking up the makeshift torch, Ameilianus smiled and said, "But first a light something to remember me by!" And with a mighty throw, Ameilianus threw the torch in Faust's makeshift lab!

\*\*BOOM!\*\* The lab exploded almost as soon as the torch made contact with the floor! The explosion knocked back all of the witnesses back four feet and sent flaming shrapnel everywhere! And what's worst every place the shrapnel touch set off a similar explosion, setting the whole village on fire! Ameilianus and his accomplices immediately got up and ran towards the dock but not before Ameilianus called back, "We'll meet again Hiccup! Sooner than you think!"

Hiccup looked at the fleeing villains, than at the raging fire. Seeing Snotlout and Astrid heading his way, he got on Toothless and flew towards the arriving riders. He gave them orders to help put out the fire (which they followed reluctantly), while he went to look for Fishlegs and the Twins. Together, Hiccup, the riders, and the villagers were able to put out the inferno. Stoick and the other Vikings helped clear some of the debris and look for survivors.

In the end, the damage to the village was extensive, but truthfully only slight more than a dragon attack in the past. Few villagers were harmed and no one was killed. In the end the biggest damage was the fact that the perpetrators got away scot-free. Hiccup knew, however, that this was not the last they would here from Ameilianus. Oh no, this was just the Beginning!

Disclaimer: I don't own DreamWorks Dragons franchise or the book series it is based off of. Hope you didn't get too impatient during the wait. Just want to be sure of the quality of the story. Though the end might be a little rushed. Also a reminder for those who forget, this is a T-rated story, meaning there is bound to be strong language and bloodshed. I try to make the curse words unreadable to protect sensibility, but they are needed for the feel of the story. Anyway, I only have the epilogue left and then I can rest and start a new story! Please read and review, I do like to hear from you!

<sup>1</sup> Reference to the episode "In Dragons We Trust" where Mildew destroyed the armory to frame Toothless and get rid of the dragons.

2 A Roman sword, longer than a gladius, used during the later Roman Empire before its fall.

## 10. Epilogue

Epilogue: Red Sky at Morningâ€|

\_There is an old saying, 'A friend is an enemy you just haven't met yet!' Not sure who said it, but in this instance it rings a bitter truth. Ameilianus pretended to be our friend and wound up be our deadliest enemy yet! The damage was extensive, but easily repaired. My faith in myself howeverâ€|\_

Hiccup looked at the crimson sunrise from the dock with a sense of despair and guilty. He should have seen through Ameilianus act sooner! Now, Berk had gone from having one enemy to \_three! Hiccup sighed listlessly, not even paying attentionas his father, Stoick, walked up and sat down beside him.

"Son," began Stoick hoping to find the words to cheer Hiccup up, "no one could have seen this coming."

"But I should have!" exclaimed Hiccup as he stood up and paced angrily along the dock, "I meanâ€|why else am I a 'hiccup' if not to see what others don't! I tamed dragons, I beat the Red Deathâ€|so why couldn't I see through that smarmy Roman's act!" With his tirade finished, Hiccup sat right back down on his spot on the dock.

"You know, even Loki, Trickster God and Maker of Nets and Fire, was out smarted from time to time." said Stoick reassuringly, "Besides, I happen to think I can be pretty clever, but heyâ€|he tricked me too. He managed to fool everyone except the Jorgensons, but that had nothing to do with them being clever!"

Hiccup had a short laugh at his father's quip before adding, "Yeah, I can just imagine them rubbing this in \_everyone's\_ faces!"

"Not for a few days, but it's comingâ€|don't you doubt that!" exclaimed Stoick, before he and his son had a shared laugh. There were few times when Stoick and Hiccup saw eye to eyeâ€|but Stoick tried to enjoyed every second of those moments!

But after the laughter died down it was clear that something was still bothering Hiccup. "Dad," began Hiccup, nervous about what he was going to ask, "when I wasâ€|fighting with Ameilianusâ€|there was a point when I had him dead to rights. He taunted me about how I 'never finish the job' and for a momentâ€|I almost killed him! I stop at the last minute and all he did was smile andâ€|call me a 'coward!' So dad, was I wrong to spare his life?"

Stoick thought long and hard in search of the right answer. It was a tricky question, no doubt, but finally he answered, "No." Elaborating further, he continued, "From what you have told the others, Ameilianus was unarmed and helpless. It is never right, under \_any circumstance, to kill an unarmed man in cold-blood! Now, it is true that, sometimes, a fight will end with you killing your opponent. But that doesn't always have to be the case! If you had killed Ameilianus liked he was goading you too, then he would have wonâ€|he just wouldn't have been around to enjoy it!"

"But dad, this isn't the first time that showing mercy has gotten me in trouble! When I was stranded on Dragon Isle with Dagur, I could have finished him then and there and we wouldn't have had to deal with him now! Every time I come close to finishing off an enemyâ€|I think of the first time I met Toothless! Sure that turned out well, but every other time since has come back to bite me!" exclaimed Hiccup, then rapidly breathing to catch his breath.

Stoick, of course, had a counter argument waiting, "What about when you spare that Heather, a girl who lied and betrayed you, and turned around to make up for her mistake? Every bad example you've made has a good example of showing mercy to an enemy to counter it. I am not saying it will always work out in the end, but you showing your enemies mercy tells me one thing about you: you're not just a better Viking than your enemies, you're a better \*\*man.\*\*"

Hiccup took a few moments to digest his father's speech and realizeâ€|he was right! No matter how many times he regretted showing mercy to people like Alvin or Dagur, looking back he would have done it again! Because Thor damn it, that's just the kind of person Hiccup was! His spirits lightened with these thoughts and he felt his faith in himself restored!

"Well, looks like your look better!" said Stoick happily as he got up to leave, but not before saying, "Oh there's someone else who liked to talk with you!" With that Toothless bounded down the dock over to Hiccup nuzzling his snout playfully into Hiccup. Seeing that everything was back to normal, Stoick went back to the business of repairing the village, the sound of his son's laughter and Toothless' playful cooing in his ear.

\_This is Berk! Although most would consider this a bad location for a village, it is filled with people who would gladly share their food and home to kind strangers! However, try to take advantage of that trust andâ€|wellâ€|we have dragons!\_

Several leagues from Berk, there was a bleak, desolate island. Originally it marked an old trading post from nations to the South to the Barbaric Archipelago. Then, a hundred years or so ago, the Roman Navy decided it would be a perfect place to help launch invasion on the Viking residents. This turned out to be a bad idea and they were forced to abandon it. The fortification and port remained intact but no one had laid claim to itâ€|until now! Originally called the Trading Spire, the Roman's renamed it \_Aquila Cubile\_, roughly translated asâ€|\_\*Eagle's Nest!\*\*\_

The island itself was a massive 50 degree slope from its flat southern coastline leading up to the fortress itself. However, the cliff face on the \_north side \_held a massive cavern with the true harbor in it, only accessible by a massive lift leading towards the fortress. Now some would wonder why the harbor was not on the south side of the island and the answer is simple: there is a hidden reef of razor sharp coral all along the south side making any landing impossible! Not only that, but reef was filled with sharks and sea-dragons waiting to devour any unfortunate sailor trying to make it to the south shore! So really, the cavern is the only safe port (pun not intended).

The cavern was a massive maw, big enough to fit a whole fleet of

ships, which it currently held. Triremes and quadremes(1) were docked in every port available and ramshackle building used as taverns or barracks for the soldiers. It had a better than ramshackle quality to it, owing to the fact that Ameilianus was having his men fix it up from years of disuses. The lift was fitted near the back wall of the cavern with a framework to keep it stable, leading straight up to the fortress and capable of holding a full Roman century and supplies!(2) The lift lead straight up into the main fortress

The fortress had a wall in a quadrangle shape 440 x 380 meters (1443 x 1246 ft.) with a height of about eight meters and a thickness of 2 meters and wall towers at each point ten meters high.(3) The main fortress was only 150 x 100 meters and three stories (30ft.) tall, but a tower in the center was over 100 ft. tall! This center tower was built much like the wall towers only bigger! Thus, Ameilianus was at the top of the tower looking Northâ€|towards Berk in particular!

Ameilianus was staring out at the horizon, glaring at that hated island that thwarted him so! True, he had the dragons and the dragon manual, but he still had to train the riders and had to deal with not only Berk, but the Outcasts and Bezerkers as well! Never had any plan of his gone so far out of control! His anger consumed him, causing him to bring his fist done of the heavy stone block, cracking it!

Making a mental note to have it replaced, Ameilianus shook his hand to getting the stinging sensation out of his hand. Just then from up the stairs came Faust, Ameilianus' mad doctor, "Hello there milord! I just came back from looking over Caligula! The good news is that other than losing some fur and some minor burns, he is perfectly healthy! The bad newsâ€|wellâ€|" said the doctor nervously as he pulled outâ€|the bald Caligula!4

Yes, it would seem that Caligula had survived the fire he fell into, but not without a cost! He lost his lovely fur and thanks to the burns on his skinâ€|he'll never get it back! Needless to say, his was not pleased as his scowling face showed. When he saw his own, he ran over (tentatively) to Ameilianus and leapt into his arms. Ameilianus gently stroked his cat's bare skin, careful not to rub to hard.

"How goes the training?" asked Ameilianus, hoping for some good news.

"Slow but steady. It would help more if we had someone show the troops the proper technique, butâ€|" answered Faust nervously, knowing his lordship was a volcano waiting to erupt.

"Unfortunately we don't \*\*have \*\*anyone to show them, do we?!" Sarcastically replied Ameilianus before turning back to the view of the ocean before continuing, "He should have sided with me, now instead we have to deal with three enemies when there should be none!"

Faust looked to the side before speaking, unsure of how Ameilianus would take his next bit of advice, "Wellâ€|you could try reestablishing an alliance with the Outcasts or-"

Ameilianus once again smashed his fist against the same stone block causing the crack to grow! "In case you forgot, let me remind

youâ€|. Iâ€|CAN"Tâ€|.TRUSTâ€|.THEM! Dagur has an unreliable mental state and Alvin, well, treachery is in his name!" exclaimed Ameilianus, shooting down even the notion of another alliance.

Faust sighed at his boss's irrational behavior and simply said, "Look you can't win if you make **\*\*everyone\*\*** your enemy!"

Ameilianus was about to retort, when he stopped with a shocked expression on his face, like he just got a brilliant idea! "THAT'S IT!" declared Ameilianus, before rushing down the stairs, dropping Caligula and knocking Faust to the side in the process! Picking themselves up, both the cat and the chemist rushed after their master. The stairs led to the map room where a giant sized map of the Barbaric Archipelago was hanging.

"If I can't have any allies, than neither will BERK!" declared Ameilianus in an angry triumphant tone, "Once my riders are ready, we'll begin raiding the islands of Berk's allies, such as the Meatheads and the Bog-Burglars!"

"And how will that get rid of Berk's allies?!" asked Faust incredulously, unsure of the scheme.

Ameilianus turned around, the shadows covering everything but his mouth and eyes, and said, "Because Berk will be blamed! After all, who else would have the dragons to do it?!  
\*\*AHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!\*\*"

THE END!

Disclaimer: I don't own DreamWorks Dragons franchise or the book series it is based off of. Alright! Finished with this story and there will be a sequelâ€|after I work on some other stories! I plan on doing one for the Steven Universe show (pretty good, if a little silly) then doing a SheZow/Danny Phantom crossover afterwards. For those who care, there won't be coarse language but there will be some violence ranging from cartoon level, to mildly bloody. I start sometime this week, need a day or two to cool off. Anyway, read and review and I'll see you soon!

1 There were in fact quadremes which are essential Roman ships that had four sets of oars and there for bigger. Think of them as the cruisers and battleships in Ameilianus' fleet!

2 That's about 100 men and all there armor, weapons, horses, and artillery!

3 These measurements are a combination of the Castra Praetoria and the Ad Pirum, noted Roman fortress in Europe.

4 Imagine a sphynx (the hairless breed of cat)

End  
file.